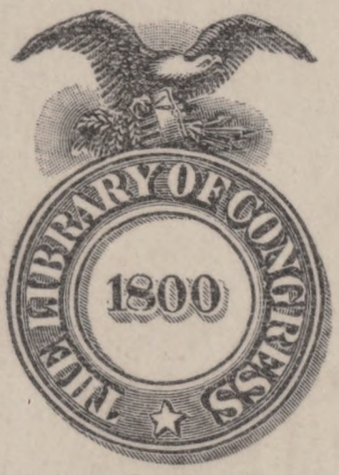
The Watson Girls

by

Maurice Francis Egan



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THE WATSON GIRLS

A Washington Story

BY

MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN

Author of "Jasper Thorn," "Jack Chumleigh." "The Legend of Lancianus," "The Châtelaine of the Roses," "In a Brazilian Forest," Etc.

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TO

Carmel Egan.

AN APOLOGY.

This book had to be written because a great many children,—one a Sister of Charity who avows that she is eighty years of age,—said that "Mr. Egan must write a book for girls." The young persons who promised to assist him with counsel, withdrew early because he did not take their advice; so he wrote the story all by himself.

If you like Amélie and the others, he promises that you shall hear more about them.

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THE WATSON GIRLS.

I.

THE WATER-LILIES.

"I HATE music," Alice Watson said, "and I think I hate the 'Melodie in F' more than anything else. It's practise this and practise that until I wish pianos had never been invented. And what's the use? Nobody listens when you play. They just talk."

The dining-room was darkened, for it was a hot morning in August, and, though a breeze blew occasionally over the Capitol grounds, yet it was not a breeze that refreshed the young girl at the piano. The long drawing-room, rose-scented by the flowers in the tall vase on the mahogany table, was cooler than any other place, but Alice felt that

it was unbearable, because vacation had come and almost gone; and she had to practise.

Clara, who was stringing the mandolin, said nothing; she sighed. These Watsons were girls of fourteen and fifteen. Clara was the younger, but quite as tall as her sister; she was blonde in complexion, with large blue eyes, and a great deal of hair, which she arranged after the Pompadour fashion when her mother's attention could be distracted. Alice was darker, slighter, more graceful, and not given as yet to much thought about her appearance. This morning Clara wore a pink shirt-waist with an immense bow of ribbon of the same tint fastened to the top of her head by a large imitation-turquoise pin.

"Oh, Clara," Alice said, as her sister rose to get a missing sheet of the hated "Melodie," "you've no string in your left shoe!"

"It broke," said Clara. "Nobody will see."

Alice shook her head disapprovingly; she was the very flower of neatness; she went on stringing the mandolin.

"Everybody is out of town except us," she said when Clara paused in her music. "I don't see why we should be kept here. If papa can't afford

to send us away and educate us, too, he might drop something off our education. I certainly would give up music and French with pleasure. Every house in the row, except the boarding-houses, is closed."

"Oh, dear me! I wish I *could* make my left hand as strong as my right! If a girl has to play the piano, she ought to be born with two right hands! You see father says that Bob's education costs a lot. But now that Arthur's at West Point, I *do* hope he'll give us more things. Let's try the 'Lorelei' together. Take the first part with the mandolin."

"We may as well. Mamma said that we must stick at it until she came from market. Ever since Cousin Amélie sent the music they're crazy about the 'Lorelei.' If there is anything I hate, it's a Saturday in the vacation!"

The girls began the "Lorelei." Its sweetness penetrated through the closed shutters into the street. Suddenly Alice paused.

"There is somebody singing!"

A sweet, high treble had taken up the strain

"Ich weis nicht, was soll es bedeuten
Das ich so traurig bin."

The girls ran to the window and peered into the sunlit street.

Opposite on the pavement in front of the Capitol grounds, was a boy, dressed in a blue blouse, with a tight black cap on his head. He seemed to be about fourteen years of age. He stood facing their house, singing with all his might. He held in the hollow of his arm a great sheaf of water-lilies.

"Listen! He is singing the words of the 'Lorelei' in German."

"Dear me! How foolish!" said Clara. "I don't see why he does not sing in English. It's much easier."

"Perhaps he is German."

"He looks so. He has rosy cheeks. All German children have rosy cheeks."

"How do you know?"

"It's just my idea,—I think that I am as much entitled to my ideas as anybody else."

"But who told you so?" persisted Alice. "He has stopped singing. I'd give him five cents, if I had it, but the ice-cream soda last night took everything I had."

"Let's play the 'Lorelei' over again," said Clara.

"It's so funny to think of anybody listening to our music."

The girls went back to the piano, and again the voice of the boy in the street rose in unison.

"There!" Clara said. "We've actually kept time! I think even Miss Witherspoon would be satisfied."

There was a ring at the door when the girls ceased playing.

"The postman," Alice said.

"No, he rings twice. It's too soon for him."

The maid entered with a bunch of water-lilies.

"A little boy left them. I could not make out what he said."

"How funny!" cried Clara. "Aren't they beauties? It was the boy that sang."

"We can't thank him," said Alice, who had gone to the window, "he is not there."

II.

THE HELPLESS MOTHER.

THE water-lilies were carefully looked after. The girls were amused. It was like being musicians on the stage to have flowers sent after a performance. How Bob would laugh,—or perhaps he would want to punch the head of the German lad. You could never tell what a boy would do!

Alice and Clara forgot their grievances in chatting over the incident. Bob, who was nearly seventeen years of age, had gone down to Mount Vernon with a party of friends. No doubt he would come back full of adventures; but nothing that could happen to him would be so strange and so true,—the girls suspected that Bob sometimes "made up" things,—as this incident of the German boy.

"He sang the tune as if he liked it," Clara said, "it must mean something to him. It is awfully pretty when you come to think of it."

"Mamma doesn't like us to say 'awfully,'" Alice interrupted.

"Oh, dear," Clara said, "mamma is so particular. American girls all say 'awfully.'"

"It's English slang, Miss Witherspoon said."

"I don't care. American girls can't be 'old timey' like foreigners. Mamma ought not to expect us to be so old-fashioned.

"Oh, Clara, you're finding fault with mother."

"I don't mean to, but there's Bob,—he goes out with boys, and here we are sitting moping over our music. They don't bother *him* with music. *He* talks slang. Just because I'm a girl, I've got to stay at home when I want to go out."

"If," said Alice, solemnly, "you find fault with mother, you'll have to tell it when you go to confession; it's disrespect to parents. There's mamma now,—she's opening the door."

A soft voice was heard outside giving orders to Joe, the negro boy, as to the disposition of the market-basket.

"You'll not tell!" exclaimed Clara.

"I never tell," said Alice. "I know a secret of Bob's now, but I wouldn't tell for the world."

"Oh, do tell me!" cried Clara. "*Only* me!"

"No," answered Alice, with dignity. "If I told one secret, I'd be suspected of telling another. And Bob's is to be a great surprise."

Mrs. Watson came into the drawing-room, looking somewhat tired and heated.

"Soon, my dears," she said, taking off her bonnet, "I trust that you may go to market for me. It's a very tiresome business."

"I'd rather go to market than practise."

"You, Clara, would rather do anything than what it happens to be your duty to do. Where did you get the water-lilies? There was not one in market. All that I could get was a bunch of red carnations."

Clara began the story at once.

"I can't make head or tail of it," said her mother. "The mandolin—the window shutters—the 'Lorelei'—Germans have rosy cheeks. Do disentangle her, Alice. *How* did you get those beautiful water-lilies? And what have rosy cheeks to do with it? *You* talk,—Clara is so breathless."

Alice told the story as directly as possible.

"Poor little fellow!" said Mrs. Watson. "He must have been homesick. The 'Lorelei' is a very

favorite song in Germany. I wish you could have found out whether he was hungry or not."

"He went off too soon," said Alice.

"What does the 'Lorelei' mean, mother. I never thought the music had any meaning."

"My dear, how *can* you say such a foolish thing? I'll read the 'Lorelei' for you sometime,—There's a pretty translation in Bishop Spalding's book of German songs. Oh, I forgot to tell you,—Your cousin, Amélie, is coming on Monday."

"Cousin Amélie, the Virginian cousin?"

"Oh, lovely!" said Alice.

Clara pouted. "She'll be a nuisance in this hot weather. She must be poor and stupid—and I hate poor relations."

Mrs. Watson looked as if she were much pained.

"Clara, I do not like such worldly talk. It is most unkind. Amélie is an orphan, your brother's niece. Oh, Clara! you forget that we are not rich, and our dear Lord was the poorest of the poor. I am sure she is nice and not stupid, though I have never seen her."

Clara's cheeks flushed. "I don't see why we can't have rich relatives, like other people. When Irene Goddard came to visit Myra Smith,

she brought her the most beautiful lilac silk waist, with exquisite tucks and lace. I fancy Cousin Amélie will not bring us anything. 'Amélie,' what a queer name!"

"Her godmother was a Frenchwoman," Mrs. Watson said, with a touch of impatience. "Is it not better to give than to receive? Is it the part of gentlewomen to think as you do? I am shocked!"

Alice kissed her mother's flushed forehead.

"Don't mind Clara. Of course, mamma, it would be nice if we had some rich relative who would take us out to drive and give us things."

Mrs. Watson sighed. She looked at the two girls helplessly. "I do wish that some power would change them; I cannot," she said to herself.

III.

SUSAN'S GIFTS.

AMÉLIE WATSON, at the very time her cousins were talking about her, was standing at Robuck Junction waiting for the train. Her old "mammy" Susan lived at the Junction, and Amélie had gone out of her way to say good-by. She might have gone directly to Washington by the Baltimore and Ohio railway, but she preferred to lose three hours rather than not say good-by to Susan. Susan, very black and wrinkled, with a red and yellow handkerchief tied over her head and a dark shawl on her shoulders, though the weather was very warm, stood, holding Amélie's hand tight.

"You always was a good chile," she said, "and a pretty chile, though I never done tell you so when you was young, but now that you're a young lady, Miss Em'ly, it's a good thing to know—in moderation."

"No, Susan," said Amélie, decidedly, "I never

was pretty. Of course, you thought so, and papa thought so, but that's because you love me."

Susan shook her head, and looked at the faint color coming and going in Amélie's cheeks.

"You'se just like that brier-rose by the fence, chile."

"You mean that I have lots of thorns, Susan," said Amélie, with a laugh. "I know I have. Father Frederick, who understands people, says that I'd lose my temper at the last moment just because St. Peter wouldn't open the door of Heaven quick enough."

"Well," said Susan, complacently, "he'd understand that,—he'd know you weren't poor white trash, just used to waitin' on themselves,—that's what he'd know."

"Susan dear," Amélie said, "it's nice to be spoiled, even when I know I don't deserve it. I wish I knew my faults as well as you don't know them. I wish somebody would point them out as Father Frederick did, without hurting me. I want to know my faults, but I don't want people to hurt me when they tell me of them. Oh, how I wish papa!—of course I love mother just as well, but she died so long ago,—she seems further

away,—but father, oh, father! Only the other day——"

Amélie leaned her head upon Susan's shoulder and cried. There was nobody to see her, except some white butterflies floating above the purple-tipped vines that clustered around the rough platform which served as a station.

"Dear lamb! Dear lamb!" Susan said. "I wish your old mammy could go with you. Not that I like Washington. It's too full of the educated niggers for me. The singin' in St. Augustine's mighty fine,—I was there two years ago to visit my kin,—but to see 'em a-bowin' and a-scrapin' and a-mongerin' just like white folks was too much for me."

"What is a-mongerin'?" asked Amélie, the tears still in her eyes; the shrewd old nurse had made this diversion purposely.

"Just a-mongerin',—that's all," responded Susan tartly, "when I say a-mongerin', I mean a-mongerin', that's all."

There was silence. Amélie was still in awe of her nurse.

"It may do very well for Baptists and Methodists to take on that way, but I don't hold with

that sort. I'se a Roman Catholic,—thanks be to God!—and I believe in keeping the Commandments and doing your work regular. If you howl yourself sick at 'sperience meetings and slight the cooking you're not goin' to walk in them golden slippers,—that's all. Now, Miss Em'ly," Susan broke off, seeing that the tears had disappeared, "You keep that cage with the white mice—what Adolphus gave you,—in your left hand, when the train comes, and the bunch of roses and 'sparagras vine,—what Cecelia Veronica give you,—next to it in the same hand. Then your right hand will be free for the jar of yellow tomatoes, preserved in ginger,—what Martha Mary gave you,—and for the little picture of Abraham Lincoln,—what Aloysia Amelia drawed for you. Your trunk is all right, but I will tote your bag and the watermelon, with Adolphus' name on it, and put them in the seat beside you. I hear the train!"

Susan put her ear to the ground.

"Yes, it's comin'. Now, Miss Em'ly, you just keep yo' head high. Don't you let anybody moosle you,—you ain't old Judge Gray's granddaughter for nothin'! What's them Watsons, I'd

like to know. Just because they're livin' in a three-story house, they think they're gregarious. If you want 'em taken down any time you just send for me! And, thanks to your father, there's a cabin over there, where your old mammy can take care of you, if you're sick or have any misery!"

The train came in sight.

When it stopped, the conductor, who knew Susan of old,—she sold fried chicken and coffee to the passengers on the midday train,—gallantly helped Amélie into the car with her gifts.

Susan's smile showed all her teeth as the train started. She took out another bandanna handkerchief and waved it until the train was out of sight. And then she threw herself among the purple-tipped weeds and wept aloud.

"Oh, my baby! my baby!" she cried.

But nobody saw her except the fluttering white butterflies.

"Oh, my dear baby! out in the cold, cold world!"

IV.

A GLIMPSE OF THE WORLD.

AMÉLIE did not notice the amused glances of the people around her. The white mice would have been sufficient to attract attention without the initialed watermelon and the large picture of Abraham Lincoln, the big, tightly compressed bouquet of pink monthly roses, with their trailing fringe of asparagus vine and the tall stone jar of yellow tomatoes.

In fact, she kept her eyelids almost closed to keep back the tears. Everything had changed so suddenly! Her mother's death had occurred so long ago that Amélie scarcely remembered it. Then her godmother, Madame de Guerin, had taken her to New Orleans; but every summer she came back to her father. Madame de Guerin had died in 1897, and she lived with the motherly Sisters, in their Convent. Her father—young Mars' Watson, as Susan would have called him,—came to see her there during the session of the

winter school. He did not look like himself. She went back to Richmond with him. Then followed happy days. Was there anybody like her father? With her eyes closed, she recalled the past,—so recently the present. But God had taken him. Susan, her nurse, had gone to Robuck to take care of her own numerous family when Amélie went to New Orleans, so the girl,—she was only sixteen,—had been housekeeper, advised and directed by Susan's niece, Dinah.

When her father died, she had been away, sent off by him to visit a school friend in Charlestown. This made it all the harder;—but Father Frederick said that his last words had been a prayer for her, and this was the greatest of her consolations.

She was awakened from her reverie by the porter.

"One dollar, Miss—parlor car seat."

Amélie had, as was usual when her father was alive, entered the parlor car. She had determined to be very frugal, for she knew that she could have but little money now. She looked helplessly at the jar, the cage of white mice, the bouquet, the picture and her bag. How could she ever carry them all to another car? She meekly paid the dollar, and looked about her. In the seat in front

of hers was a young woman, dressed in soft pink lawn and wearing a Leghorn hat, laden with pink roses. She had put down her novel for a moment, and she was looking at Amélie with amusement in her bright eyes. Amélie saw it and smiled. She was not embarrassed by the gifts strewn about her. The young woman evidently expected that she would be, for she turned away slightly and half-murmured, "Excuse me!"

Further down in the car there was a tired-looking woman, with three children. Beyond them sat three men playing cards. They had laughed immoderately when Amélie and her belongings had been handed in. And, just beyond them, a youth, with a large seal ring, a gold-headed cane, and a golf suit; he had not yet recovered from his amusement. But of this, Amélie was unconscious. Susan and her children had been kind in their own way. That was enough for her. Other persons might think as they chose. Of course, she could not keep all these gifts, but they should never know that she did not value them.

Amélie was dressed in a neat, dark-blue gown, with a little bolero jacket and a light-blue silk waist. Her hat was of dark-blue straw, with

cornflowers and bows of white ribbon. Amélie was rather pale, but her skin was clear, and her brown hair was carefully parted over a rather high forehead. She was graceful because she was unconscious, and she looked what she was, a nice simple, direct sort of a girl. Her bag, neatly buckled with straps of Russia leather, caused the young woman with the Leghorn hat to speak to her. That young woman had a theory that people could be judged by their traveling bags. Amélie's was of Russian leather, presented by Madame de Guerin, who also had a theory that all traveling apparatus should be in good form.

"You have a very pretty bag," said the young lady, noticing the initials "E. M. G." on the silver plate.

"Yes, I like it very much."

"Are those your initials?"

"They are my godmother's. She lived in Paris a great deal. This is a little French bag."

"Yes,—I see. You have been abroa"

"Once, with my father."

"I suppose you are going to Washington?"

"Oh, yes," answered Amélie, brightening.

"She must be somebody," the young lady

thought. "But I don't know,—she is traveling alone. Whom do you know in Washington?" she said.

"Oh, nobody, except my cousins—the Watsons."

"Senator Watson?"

"Oh, dear, no!" Amélie smiled. "Mr. Watson is not even a judge."

The fashionable young lady resumed her novel. Amélie was evidently "nobody."

After a while the young man in the golf suit strutted leisurely toward Amélie. At this moment she was wishing she could help the tired woman and the three children.

"We want some fruit, mamma!" one of those little girls had said, in a fretful voice. "We haven't had any dinner."

"We'll have dinner when we reach Washington," said the mother.

"Oh, we can't wait. Oh, mamma, we are so hot and tired!"

The young man stopped, with a superior smile, and said, with a view to much amusement,—

"Ah, Miss, you're from the country, I see. You've lots of presents for the city folks. Can I do anything for you?"

Amélie met his bantering stare very modestly.

"Yes," she said in her clear voice. "Just carry this melon to the porter and have him cut it up for those children. You can have a nice, large piece yourself."

The young woman was heard to laugh behind her novel. The young golfer grew red, and then meekly bore the melon to the porter.

Amélie smiled, but took no further notice of the impudent young man. The three small children, in a little while, were quite happy. The rich red of the melon was disappearing, while they feasted their eyes on the white mice and the picture of Abraham Lincoln.

"Susan would be pleased, I am sure, if she saw that tired mother,—and I've kept the roses."

Thinking of others, she did not have time to feel lonely until she saw the dome of the Capitol from the car window. With a rush, all sorts of fears came upon her. She had never seen her cousins or her aunt. She had met her uncle a few moments at her father's funeral. Her cousins might not like her. She was neither clever nor attractive.—"Washington!" The train stopped.

V.

THE HORSELESS CARRIAGE.

AMÉLIE stepped from the train, gratefully, leaving the white mice, the gorgeous picture, and the remains of the melon, with the children, who were equally grateful. The pink monthly roses had retained their freshness, and they seemed somehow or other to relieve her loneliness. They were pledges of Susan's undying affection. Bag in hand she walked through the gate, and upstairs to the waiting-room. There was nobody to meet her, and it suddenly occurred to her that her cousins had not even a photograph of her. How could they be expected to know her? Nevertheless, she was unreasonably impatient at their not coming. Her uncle would have known her certainly,—for everybody said she was like her father. She found her purse and nervously made sure that her trunk-check and money were safe, and there, too, was the card with the Watsons' address upon it.

A blue-capped smiling porter approached her.

"This way, Miss," he said, taking her bag. He was doubtlessly a servant of the Watsons, Amélie thought. She was relieved; she followed him very modestly through a great crowd of excursionists waiting for another train.

"Step in, Miss,—there, your bag is all right."

Amélie obeyed, and found herself, to her surprise, in an automobile.

"Where do you want to go, Miss?" said the porter with extended cap. Amélie had sufficient experience with servants to know what this meant. She dropped a quarter into the cap. He had not been sent by the Watsons, after all. She was not pleased to be in an automobile; she had not even seen one before; the appearance of the thing rather frightened her. But she was ashamed to get out before all those people; it would look so "countrified," and Amélie was, above all, afraid of being "countrified;" so she sat bolt upright, with an air of great dignity.

"Where?" asked the driver, whom the careful would call a "chauffeur."

In her nervousness, Amélie picked the wrong card from her pocket-book, and read "Ecking-

ton." It was the card of an old schoolfriend's mother, but Amélie, in her fear and doubt, could not just then distinguish very clearly. She was afraid of this new carriage, afraid of the new city, yet more afraid of letting anybody know that she was afraid.

"Eckington!—all right!" the driver said.

The automobile glided on the smooth asphalt with a queer sound that made Amélie more and more afraid. There might be an explosion at any moment,—and she had forgotten to secure her trunk! She preserved her dignity, however, and, as the automobile passed onward, her fears began to grow less,—for she passed another of those doubtful vehicles filled with smiling children and a white-capped nurse. As the carriage had paused a moment near the station, to let a car go by, she saw two girls looking at her curiously.

"It might be," said one; "we are a little late."

"No,"—and this Amélie heard,—"it can't be she,—she would be in mourning."

But so great was her trepidation of mind, that the words seemed to have no special meaning at the time. In a dim way, she recalled the fact that her dear father had disliked mourning clothes, and

therefore, since his death, she had worn the color he liked best,—blue. She felt she would have liked to call out to the girls; but the vehicle had gone away from them; she looked back; they were entering the station.

On she sped. If Amélie had been in her usual frame of mind she would have enjoyed the drive; but she was torn by various anxieties. They were in the suburbs now,—rows of locusts and oaks, with blossomless dogwoods, with here and there a touch of the pink of the briar-rose, seemed to pass her. The air was full of the soft perfume of cool groves. Suddenly a panic seized her. Where was the strange, silent being who managed this horseless carriage taking her?

"Are we near the Capitol?" she called out.

"No," said the driver, in a pleasant voice, "we've been going away from the Capitol for some time. We're at the gypsy camp,—do you want your fortune told, Miss?" he asked, with a laugh.

On her left Amélie saw a space, sparsely shaded, which contained two tents, a large, gaily painted van, and several children playing contentedly in the dust. A well-dressed, olive-skinned old lady was complacently smoking a pipe.

Amélie, who, by this time, had become somewhat morbid, principally because she had not eaten anything to speak of since morning, shrank back.

"Oh, dear," she said, "I am lost."

"Maybe you've given me the wrong address," said the matter-of-fact voice. "The gypsies won't hurt you. Lots of people come out here to have their fortunes told."

"I think it is a sin," said Amélie in a faint voice. "Oh, dear!—here's the right card!" She drew the card from her pocket-book, and tried to say, in a voice befitting a young lady determined to keep the driver in his place, "Oh, dear, isn't it awful! The address is B street, near the Capitol."

"On the Hill," said the man, with a chuckle. "Why, you might have walked there in five minutes. Don't be afraid, Miss,—I have a little girl just your age, myself."

Amélie blushed to the roots of her hair, and buried her face in the roses. The automobile turned, and she did not recover her dignity until the majestic dome of the Capitol came in sight again.

Past the B. & O. station, past an engine house, with a pump near, past many black boys with

hoses refreshing small plots of grass, and foliage-covered houses, the automobile sped, until it stopped in front of a red brick house, with high brown-stone steps.

"A dollar and a half, Miss."

Amélie took the money from her pocket-book, reflecting, as she did so, that if she went on at this rate of extravagance, her plans of economy would be as the idle wind.

VI.

SHE IS RECEIVED

"It was *she!* The automobile, pink roses, and all!" said Clara. "My! Isn't she swell? In an automobile! I thought she was just a little country girl!"

Mrs. Watson, who had been all anxiety for Amélie since the girls had returned from the station without her, was in the hall. She ran downstairs and clasped her niece in her arms.

"Oh, my dear, how much you are like my dear husband!"

Amélie could only cling to her speechlessly. Then she began to cry, as she looked up into her aunt's face.

"And I am like father."

"Do go out, Alice, and stop mamma's making a scene on the pavement! Do! It is amusing all the neighbors."

"She's rather stylish," said Alice. "It's too

bad we missed her. Papa telegraphed that he couldn't come when we had been ready a half hour. It wasn't our fault."

"I'm glad everybody has seen her come in an automobile; it's almost as good as a private carriage."

The girls advanced to the door of the drawing-room, and their mother came in, with her arm about Amélie's waist. Bob had run out to secure the bag.

"Children," said Mrs. Watson, "this is your cousin,—now one of my daughters. I trust that you will love her as she deserves to be loved."

Very much touched, Alice and Clara bowed to Amélie.

"Let me take the flowers," Alice said, while Clara stood still, uncertain whether she should kiss her cousin or not. The impulse was to be kind, but she lacked what Sister Angela called "simplicity," and she did not show her kindness. Alice was likewise undemonstrative; she held the flowers in her hand. She felt an affectionate interest in Amélie, which she did not show for fear of being thought "gushing." Bob, the curly-headed and mischievous, had no fears; he kissed

Amélie and blinked his eyes, with an expression in his clenched fists which seemed to say,—"If anybody says I'm crying, I'll punch him."

Amélie, disengaging herself from her aunt's arms, looked at her cousins. They seemed to her to be stiff and proud. She turned hastily from them.

"May I go to my room, Aunt?" she asked.

Alice drew herself up and Clara looked away, with an affectation of coldness.

"She is stuck-up," Clara whispered, "I can see it. I am sure I shall not like her."

Mrs. Watson, noticing, with a sigh, the expressions on the faces of her daughters, led the way to the room allotted to Amélie. It was a tiny room, hung with blue and white paper, with a toilet-table draped in the same colors, on which, in a tall glass, was a bunch of cornflowers.

"How pretty!" said Amélie, gratefully.

"Your father once wrote to me, 'My little girl loves cornflowers and blue and white,'—so I remembered it."

Amélie kissed her aunt again.

"And the little statue, too?"

There was a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes in a niche facing the bed.

"That's mine!" said Bob proudly. "I lent you *that!*"

Amélie looked at him, a mist of tears in her eyes.

"What a good cousin you are!"

If she had said "little," Bob would not have liked it. He smiled, and showed his teeth, Amélie felt that she had made a friend, and that moment friends seemed the rarest of possessions.

"Dinner will be served at six o'clock. You must rest until then. In the meantime I will send for your trunk. Come, Bob!"

Amélie thanked her; she looked out of the window to forget her loneliness, for before her was a most beautiful scene, the Capitol rising from the exquisite terrace, supporting the great dome, with the dark figure upon it symbolizing hope and strength.

VII.

THE BITTER WORDS.

ONE of those hot spells which make Washington almost unendurable had just passed. The asphalt on Pennsylvania Avenue no longer yielded to the foot as if it were a hot quicksand. A heavy rain had cleared the air, which, in the morning light, actually seemed to shine with crystalline brilliancy. Alice and Clara began to revive, and to grumble less about their enforced residence in the city.

Amélie liked Mr. Watson. He was gentle in his manner, considerate in his actions; but he had an air of one who was suffering. Amélie noticed that Mrs. Watson looked across the table once very anxiously at him. His high forehead and pleasant blue eyes reminded her very much of her own father. Amélie was drawn towards him because he seemed so gentle. Mrs. Watson was very sympathetic; but Amélie was somewhat repelled by what at times seemed to her

to be a touch of worldliness. However, on examining her conscience after the first day she rebuked herself for that suspicion. She knew that she was inclined to judge rashly, and she blushed when she realized that she might have so judged one to whom she owed her home.

Alice and Clara, who had come down to dinner on the first night, dressed in their best white frocks, determined that they would treat Amélie with politeness, but nothing more. Clara said, very frankly, that her cousin was "stuck-up," and Alice called her, in her confidences to Clara, "heartless."

"She ought to be in black," said Alice. "I think that a girl who would come down to dinner in a blue frock, with lace around the neck, so soon after her father's death, is a cold-hearted thing!"

"It does look queer,—I wonder mamma is not shocked."

"Oh, mamma will forgive anything in her niece,—much more than she would stand from her daughters. We'll have to play second-fiddle *now*. I don't see why she came here; there's no room for her."

"She's rather stylish, Alice," said Clara.

"Stylish! As if that counted when one is too indifferent to wear mourning for one's father. I could be stylish, too, if papa wasn't so close with his money. He's too mean!"

"We might have more things,—and go somewhere. Why, all the people that don't keep boarding-houses in this neighborhood are out of town. Sister Eulalie is always preaching patience. 'Don't spend too much money for bon-bons, and don't go too often to the theater,' I heard her say to the Blue Ribbons the other day. She needn't warn *us*,—with our allowance, you can't spend very much for candy or anything else."

"Papa *is* close," assented Clara. "It's really hard on us. All the girls of the school are out of town, and we——well, we've a rich cousin, anyhow,—a girl that can afford to drive in an automobile will have plenty of money to spend at Huyler's."

"We can make her feel that we're not going to bow down to her, anyhow."

Amélie had, at the convent in New Orleans, been trained very methodically. An appeal, as to her duties, had been made to her conscience. She

was not specially fond of music, but she arose sometime before breakfast to practise on the three days on which she did not go to Mass.

"Horrible!" said Alice, on the second day after Amélie's arrival. "She would please our music teacher, Miss Witherspoon. There goes Chopin's 'Trois Valses!' I really can't stay in bed if this sort of thing is to be steady."

"Then mamma won't have to call you."

"I tell you, Clara, she's one of the goody-goody sort; she'll be an example to us, and father will make a text of her."

"Father looks worried. It's because he isn't a Catholic, I suspect. Well, we've done all we could. I have said prayers and prayers."

"And so have I. You may have my pink ribbon for your hair, Clara,—it's only a little soiled, and I'll borrow your silk gloves for the Band Concert."

"Not at all! I'll not have your cast-off things!" Clara protested in various keys until their mother called them to breakfast for the third time.

During the first week Amélie was not happy. When he spoke to her, Mr. Watson was kind, but

he seldom spoke. And, after the first two days, Mrs. Watson was well occupied with household affairs. She spent much time in making dresses for her daughters, while they occupied themselves with such novels as they could obtain. Bob was very friendly; he showed Amélie his rabbits, and he was most grateful when she gave him one of the two tennis rackets she had in her trunk. There was a tennis court not far off which the young persons of the neighborhood were permitted to use. The Watson girls never took advantage of this, because they had no tennis suits, but they at once told Amélie it was because they might meet queer people there.

On one afternoon when the girls were safe in their room, Bob and Amélie betook themselves to the game of cat's-cradle,—one of Bob's favorites. It grew tiresome after a while.

"Let's play tennis!"

Amélie brightened.

"Your mother——"

"Oh, mamma won't object; you go and get your racket!"

Amélie had faithfully practised her "Trois Valses," and the usual exercises; she had read the

prescribed five pages of "Stephanette" in French, and sat silent for an hour. Her cousins, after luncheon, had gone off, with the cold excuses of bare civility; her aunt was in her room, sewing,—Amélie could hear the whirr of the machine,—and she was left to herself and Bob. She liked exercise; she longed for a brisk walk, or even a game of croquet, and, when Bob suggested tennis, her eyes brightened.

"I've asked mother," Bob said, arriving with the two rackets, "and she says 'yes.' She says you must put on a loose shirt-waist; and if there are any noxious people on the grounds, you're not to speak to them; and you're not to sass anybody,—no, that was for me, nor to threaten to 'do' another boy as you—I mean me—did last time. Come!"

Amélie ran up to her room, and returned attired with great comfort in a loose blouse and bright skirt, and a little red Cuban cloth hat. Her heart was light and she almost ran at Bob's heels towards the tennis court.

It was one of those cool days that cause the Washingtonians to declare that, even in August, their city is the only one worth living in.

Two boys, of about Bob's age, were already at

the court. They were very gracious to Amélie, as small boys generally were. They offered her a bite from an early apple, and a piece of lemon candy, both of which she accepted.

Then followed nearly two hours of real pleasure.

"Oh, what fun, Bob!"

"Ain't it?" said Bob. "You're a peach at tennis!"

It was nearly five o'clock before Amélie and Bob reached the house.

"There's somebody in the drawing-room," Bob said. "It's that Inez Fawcett. There's her cart at the door with the groom."

"Oh, Bob, dear," whispered Amélie, "I'm not fit to be seen. Just draw the portière in the hall so that I can run upstairs without being seen!"

She stood in the doorway, while Bob silently obeyed her.

"Oh, yes, we've a cousin with us from the South," she heard Alice say, "but she's not exactly our sort. She seems to have forgotten her father completely. He's not dead a year; she doesn't wear black, and she bangs away at the piano all day long."

"Awful!" said Inez, emphatically. "I'd call her a beast if she was *my* cousin!"

Amélie,—all the glow of contentment and pleasure gone from her,—crept to her room.

VIII.

AMÉLIE'S PLAN.

AMÉLIE had always declared that she was not sensitive. And, sore as she was at heart, she tried to hold her head up and to say to herself that she did not care. *She* forget her father! His picture was in the center of the mantelpiece, framed in porcelain; she took it and kissed it passionately. *She* forget! How could they say so? If they could see her heart,—if they could see her heart! Oh, how could people be so cruel? She would go away at once from a house where such unkindness was possible!

Forget her father! Slight his memory! Oh, could they think it?—And yet she deserved unkindness,—for how often had she been unkind? Father Frederick had rebuked her for sarcasm more than once. She deserved to be hurt;—but not this!—not this! Nobody in all the world had ever loved anybody as she loved her father!

How harsh these people were in their judgment. She did not wear black, because he had always spoken against the custom. It seemed to her proper that she should wear the mourning dress, as other people did,—but she had obeyed *his* wishes. And, as to her music!—if they only knew how it hurt her to play the pieces he had loved, and how hard it was for her to touch the keys of the piano. But they did not know!—She did not care! She threw herself on the bed in a passion of grief. Oh, if her father were only back!

After a time she dried her eyes; but there was still a dull pain at her heart. Father Frederick had told her to read each day in the New Testament, and in "The Following of Christ;" and her little volume of A' Kempis' work, given her by Sister Angela, was on the table beside her bed. She opened the book, and read,—

"Surely thou canst not have both joys,—take thy pleasure in this world and afterwards reign with Christ.

"If to this day thou hadst always lived in honors and pleasures, what would it avail thee, if thou wert now in a moment to die?"

She could not fix her mind on the passages. Her heart was full of bitterness. How vulgar

those young girls were, with their discontent, their desire, young as they were, to ape fashionable people! Nobody in the house wanted her to be there, except Bob. Mrs. Watson cared only for rich people;—it was with one of those rich people that those Watson girls were gossiping about her,—their own cousin! She would have died rather than have done this.

As she brushed her hair,—her cheeks burning the while,—the maid came to the door with the message that the young ladies were having tea downstairs. She refused to go down.

"I can hear that false Alice trying to impress the rich girl with the idea that they have five o'clock tea every day. Then she will ask Miss Fawcett when she expects to come out, and say that her mother had tea during the season at the English Embassy. Oh, what snobs they are!"

Amélie began to write rapidly. She would tell Sister Angela *all!* Oh, if she could be a nun! Nuns never suffered. They were always so polite and sweet and serene and kind. She would tell Sister Angela that she wanted to enter the convent at once,—*at once*. She had suffered too much in this world to endure it any longer. She would

announce at dinner her determination to go to the convent on the very next day.

Her pen flew over the paper; she gradually became, in her own eyes, a martyr. She was so glad now that she had the gift of composition. Sister Angela, who used sometimes to laugh at her "heroics," would not laugh at this!

She sealed the envelope, without re-reading the letter, and called Bob to post it. She had barely time for her bath and a change of dress before the dinner-bell should ring. She noticed that the cart was still at the door,—that Fawcett girl, of whom she had heard so often, would probably stay to dinner.

It was soon certain that this was the case. Amélie heard quick steps on the stair, and Mrs. Watson came in, rather nervously, to get the cut-glass vases from the top-shelf of the closet in Amélie's room.

"I hope that I am not inconveniencing you, my dear,—but Inez Fawcett will stay to dine with us, and I must make some preparation,—she is used to so much, you know,—she is such an elegant associate for the girls. It is very trying in this hot weather."

Mrs. Watson certainly seemed worn and harassed. Amélie looked at her,—a certain contempt in her heart. She had allowed that thoughtless speech to excite all the bitterness of her heart. Those girls neglected their father and mother, and yet they accused her of forgetfulness!

"Just wait till I tie this ribbon, aunt," she said, having rapidly determined on a plan of campaign, "and I'll help you."

"Thank you, dear! The young ladies are so busy entertaining Inez, that I can't disturb them. She's so accomplished,—I hope you will hear her speak French and sing; you must observe her closely, she has such well-formed manners. Indeed, though you may find her to be a little haughty at first, you will see that she is very elegant.—The groom is driving off. She is going to stay, and there isn't a flower for the table! The girls are *so* careless sometimes!"

Amélie's cheeks flushed; her pride was roused.

"I can find some flowers, aunt. Don't worry!" she said, mounting the library ladder that always stood in the high closet. "Here are the vases. Anything else? I'm going down to help you."

Mrs. Watson kissed her niece very gratefully.

IX.

THE SALAD.

AMÉLIE did not feel altogether comfortable when her aunt kissed her. She blushed, and with reason. Her aunt believed that she was making this offer out of love, but she knew in herself that it was out of the bitterness in her heart. She would show her cousins how to act. At the same time, she knew that she was about to do wrong, since what she was about to do had not a good motive.

The fence that enclosed the back yard was covered with that species of clematis* whose flowers are white and tiny and set on sprays of very graceful leaves. Amélie went down, scissors in hand, and cut enough for the table; she remembered there were several roses,—great crimson ones,—on the bushes on the little front lawn. She walked through the basement to the front yard, her head

* Clematis,—Virginiana.

concealed in a sun-bonnet, and cut four splendid flowers, which were almost ready to fall to pieces.

"Who's that?" she heard Inez Fawcett ask.

There was silence.

Amélie's first impulse was to disappear in the basement door. If she had followed it she would have been happier. She waited, and heard Clara's voice say:—

"Oh, only a country cousin. You'll meet her at dinner!"

Amélie's cheeks flushed and her eyes filled with tears—she, Judge Gray's granddaughter,—she, Mr. Watson's own niece!—to be called only a country cousin! Sister Angela, hearing of this, would be obliged to confess that it was neither undue pride or sensitiveness that made her so angry. Oh, well, she would show them! No; she was not proud or sensitive; but she had great self-respect; she was like the Grays in that! She would show them!

Mrs. Watson found her labors much lightened. Amélie flew about with the alacrity of a bird building a nest. She produced an elaborate centerpiece from her trunk, with great garlands of

strawberries and leaves, for Mrs. Watson could find nothing in her stores to match the roses.

"There's nothing for desert but cantaloupes!" Mrs. Watson spoke despairingly. "Bob has just come from the confectioner's, to say that he could get only a quart of vanilla ice-cream. A big order for a Sunday school lawn party has engaged everything!"

"Leave that to me and the 'Creole Cook Book,'" Amélie answered, on her mettle. "And I'll be responsible for the salad, too!"

"What a dear you are," Mrs. Watson said with a sigh. "I wish my girls were like you,—but, of course, a girl can't be ornamental and useful, too. You're going to be one of the Marthas of life."

"No," said Bob, "Emmy will be the Cinderella, and I'll be the Fairy Godfather."

"Bob," said Amélie, inwardly raging at her aunt's reference to the useful and ornamental, "you cut the melons carefully in half, take the seeds out of them, and put them back on the ice! Mind!

Bob obeyed without a word, which was unusual.

"There's nothing but lettuce," said Mrs. Watson timidly. She was rather over-awed by what in her mind, she called Amélie's "initiative."

"Lettuce will do. Madame brought me up on the 'Creole Cook Book,' aunt,—and I just *had* to know things. Come here, Bob, when you've put those cantaloupes back. Thank you, cook, you've dried those lettuce leaves very well. I'll teach you how to make 'assaisonment Français.'"

"French dressing?" asked her aunt. "Mine is never quite good."

"Teach me," said Bob. "I'll astonish father on Sunday by making it at the table."

"Get the wooden fork and spoon for me."

"Won't a steel fork do?"

"No," said Amélie, forgetting her grievance in the pleasure of the work. Her frock was covered by a long blue apron, and even the cook, who hated people in her kitchen, was pleased by her way of "going about things." "No, Bob. Nobody ever touches lettuce leaves with steel."

"Why?"

"Oh, just because," said Amélie, with decision.

"The dressing ought to be made at the table; but we'll have to mix it here, as I shouldn't like to take so much responsibility before my *city* cousins and their elegant friend."

Bob looked up in surprise at her tone, but she had turned away her head.

"Now, Bob, bring me that small bowl. You see, of course, that the lettuce leaves have not a drop of water on them. They *must* be dry, or your salad will be a failure. See!—I put three tablespoonfuls of olive oil into the bowl. *Three*, mind,—and the oil *first*."

"Why?"

"Oh, because;—you can find out the reason when you study chemistry, for cooking is only a higher kind of chemistry, Sister Angela says. Attention, Bob!—I am gradually,—*gradually*, you see, adding the one-fourth of a tablespoonful of black pepper and one-fourth of a tablespoonful of salt. See! they are now thoroughly mixed. Now,—watch!—I am *gradually* adding the vinegar. I stir the mixture for about a minute. Now, I pour it over the lettuce. It will not be so good as if it were done on the table, just before it is eaten. But, cook, you'll have to stir it up in the big bowl before you bring it in."

"Yes, Miss."

Bob repeated the directions over to himself.

"Of course, cooking is girl's work; but every

man ought to know how to carve and make a salad papa says."

"I'll teach you to make dozens," Amélie answered.

"It's such a relief not to have to think of everything," Mrs. Watson said. "Oh, such a relief! I wish *my* girls were like you!"

Amélie was delighted at this; her aunt would doubtless say this to the girls themselves;—and that would make them envy her. In a few minutes she had filled the cantaloupes with vanilla ice-cream, put the halves together again, and surrounded them with ice in the largest glass punch bowl.

"One half to each person," she said. "Now, aunt, I think I'd better remain in the kitchen until after dinner. I can keep an eye on things."

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Watson. "That's out of the question. The cook understands the soup and the black coffee. No, my dear,—we really can't let you be the Cinderella of the house."

"Thank you," Amélia answered, with a touch of irony. "I'll see how the table looks, and then run up to comb my hair."

Until the dinner-bell rang, she exulted in the de-

termination to avenge herself on those girls. The beautiful engraving of Carlo Dolci's "Mother of Sorrows" looked down on her from the wall. She did not let her eyes rest upon it for a moment. She tied a white ribbon in her hair, took the handful of pansies from the glass on her table, and went to the drawing-room. The girls and Inez Fawcett were laughing in their chamber.

"About *me*, of course," Amélie thought.

Mr. Watson was in the drawing-room, reading the evening paper. He kissed her affectionately. She pinned the yellow pansies in his buttonhole. He seemed pleased.

"You are *so* thoughtful, child," he said. "How did you know I like pansies?"

"I just guessed it."

"I wish," he begun; then he broke off with a sigh, "I wish—all girls were like you."

X.

"SHOWING OFF."

THE dinner went off well. Bob praised the salad extravagantly. The twilight began to fall, and the tall silver candelabra were brought in;—in fact, Miss Fawcett, a tall, blonde girl, with a rather artificial manner, and a loud voice, was compelled to admit that everything was in good taste.

"She came here because she had no place else to go," said Amélie to herself. "I can see *that*. All her other friends are out of town, and she is only kept by the dentist."

Mr. Watson called attention to his pansies.

"There's a little girl that thinks of me," he said. "I shall not forget it."

"Pansies,—' and there is pansies, and that is for thoughts,' " quoted Mrs. Watson, greatly pleased by the success of the dinner so far.

"Wasn't it Longfellow said that?" asked Miss Fawcett. "I'm sure I heard it somewhere." She

was seventeen; she adored Marie Corelli, and was considered well read.

"No," said Alice, with authority. "It's not grammatical and Longfellow always writes good grammar; when I was in the Fifth Grade we used to parse him."

Mr. Watson chuckled.

"Oh, my dear, you're a modern," he said. "Who can tell me what this ungrammatical Ophelia says about the violets?"

There was silence, and Miss Fawcett, who was accustomed to be the queen of her company, wished that the conversation had not become literary.

"'There's a daisy,'" spoke up Amélie; "'I would give you some violets, but they withered all,'" she paused; she had not thought of what followed when she began. But she must go on; she would not show feeling before these people; yet her voice trembled. "'There's a daisy,'" she repeated, "'I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died. They say he made a good end.'"

"That's from Shakespeare's Hamlet. A professor read it in the hall of Gonzaga College; I heard it. Wilfred Goode, who goes to that school,

took me?" said Bob. "You ought to have heard the man speak what the ghost said; it *was* leery, —no mistake. It was bloomin' leery."

"No slang!" said Mrs. Watson.

Mrs. Watson suggested that they should take their coffee in the drawing-room, while Clara, who never took coffee, should play one of her pieces. The girls looked at their mother gratefully;— Inez Fawcett must be impressed with their "good form." It was rather a bitter drop in their pleasure to hear their father say:—

"You girls really ought to imitate your cousin, and read some good poetry."

Amélie heard it; she exulted; her plan was working.

Clara played the hated "Melody in F," but even she could not altogether spoil it.

"You sing, Miss Fawcett?" Mrs. Watson asked.

"Oh, yes, Inez sings very well."

Inez smiled, and taking off her bracelets, ran her hands over the keys, and sang, "O Promise Me," with many vocal ornaments, and a tremolo.

Amélie smiled, as she gathered up the coffee cups. She hoped they would ask her to sing.

"I wish my little niece would give us something," Mrs. Watson said, when Inez Fawcett had been induced to sing a second time, with many airs and graces. "I hear her practising vocal exercises sometimes."

"With pleasure," Amélie said. She admired Inez Fawcett for the readiness she showed to sing when she was asked. "She has been taught to do the proper thing, at least. Nobody hesitates to play *now*."

Amélie began the prelude to the "Lorelei." Her cousins exchanged glances; *she* couldn't sing *that*. But she began in German:

"Ich weiss nicht, was soll es bedeuten,
Dass ich so traurig bin;
Ein Märchen aus alten Zeiten,
Das kommt mir nicht aus dem Sinn."

Amélie had a sweet soprano voice, and she was very careful to make the accompaniment really an accompaniment, and not to give the chords as if they were the second part in a duet.

Mr. Watson, who was musical, listened, surprised. Amélie's voice was absolutely true, and, though it was not great in volume, it was sympathetic, and she evidently was following to the

letter, the precepts of her teacher. Everybody listened with pleasure.

> " Die Luft ist kühl und es dunkelt,
> Und ruhig fliesst der Rhein ;
> Der Gipfel des Berges funkelt
> In Abendsonnenschein."

There was nothing showy or unusual about Amélie's performance. It was evident that she had a good teacher, and that she was very careful to make the most of her voice and training.

" I have heard that many times before," said Bob. " Why do you sing it in German ? "

" It was written by the German poet, Heine, who was an exquisite poet at times ; but a great mocker at serious things."

" Then you don't know German ? " said Clara, relieved.

" No, I just learned that song in German."

" You can't tell us the English, then ? " said Bob, in a disappointed tone.

" Oh, yes. I can recite Bishop Spalding's translation,—Shall I ? "

" Do," said Bob. " Please, do."

Amélie's eyes sparkled. She knew that she could read this particular piece well. She did

not move from the piano stool, but merely turned, facing the hearers:—

"Why I am sad I can not tell;
A legend of the olden time
Rings in my heart like far-off bell,
And thrills me with its solemn rhyme.

"The day stoops low, the air is chill,
And silent flows the darkling Rhine;
Upon the brow of vine-clad hill
The rays of setting sun soft shine.

"High on the rocks a maiden fair
Sits all alone, as angel bright;
She sits and combs her golden hair,
While day is sinking into night.

'She combs her hair with golden comb,
And sings the while, a sweet, sad song,
Which floats away as the flecking foam
Is borne by flowing wave along.

'The boatman drifting in a dream
Glides on, and thrills with wildest pain;
The rocks he sees not in the stream,
Enchanted by that plaintive strain.

"The wave I ween will swallow soon
The boatman in his reverie.
The Lorelei in her witching tune
Sings with the voice of destiny."

"You have a very clear enunciation, Amélie," her aunt said. "I wish my girls——"

"Oh, mamma, don't," Alice said. "Inez, you sing something in French, don't you?"

"Yes,—but I can't remember the words of 'La Couronne d' Or.' Let me think."

"This is the way it goes!" Amélie turned to the piano and played the accompaniment, singing,

La couronne d'or
N'est pas d'un roi
La perle,—c' est foi,
C'est vérité ;—pour moi
Sans amour je n'étais pas roi."

"Dear me! You know everything," said Alice, enviously. "Why didn't you tell us?"

"She seems to be very highly accomplished for a country cousin," said Inez, in rather a disappointed tone. "At least," she whispered to Clara, "she knows how to show off. Good-by—there's my trap waiting. Thanks, awfully."

XI.

AN INTERVIEW.

"I DON'T care!" Amélie said, when she was alone in her room. "I hate everybody!"

And yet her uncle had congratulated her, her aunt had pressed her hand warmly, her cousins were evidently impressed by her talent, and Inez Fawcett had been taught that the "country cousin" was not an awkward ignoramus. She had interested Bob, helped her aunt, given pleasure to her uncle,—and still she was irritated, conscience-stricken and unhappy. She had succeeded in throwing her cousins in the shade. She knew that both her uncle and aunt had been comparing their girls with her during the evening, much to their disadvantage, and that the elegant Miss Fawcett had been forced to admit the "country cousin's" cleverness. She had succeeded in what she had set out to do, and she had heard, too, that whisper about "showing off!"

"I hate everybody! What a mean, gossiping thing that Inez Fawcett is! 'Showing off!' I heard,—and my cousins laughed. Nice cousins!" Amélie added, sarcastically, "to turn against you for the first stranger that comes,—just as ill-bred upstarts always do."

In her heart Amélie knew that she had tried to "show off" with a view of making her cousins and Miss Fawcett envious; she knew that her motive in helping her aunt and in teaching Bob to make the salad had been mean and unworthy. There was no consolation in the knowledge that her aunt regarded her as a kind, helpful girl, or that Bob thought that she was phenomenally good. Her own heart was a witness against her. She had gained her end, but she could not lie down with a clear conscience. She had done harm, and she had done it wilfully.

They had provoked her and had been disdainful! But was it well that she should return disdain for disdain? She had been brought up as a good Catholic; she had believed herself to be one; she knew that the object of religion was not the mere learning of the Catechism or the knowing of the texts of Scriptures that support the doctrines

of the Church, or even strict observance of duties, —but the love of God, shown in thought and action, the love of her neighbor, the desire to do God's will, the having the thought of the dear Lord always near.

She looked up at the "Mater Dolorosa;" the eyes seemed full of reproach. She had gained her end,—and yet she dared not say the "Our Father!" "I cannot forgive *them*," she said; "'showing off,' indeed! I'll make them sorry for it!"

That what had been said was true made it all the more bitter. There is nothing hurts so much as the truth, spoken by unloving lips. Her pride and self-love had been hurt. She knew that she could gain no comfort from her confidants, Sister Angela and Father Frederick. She knew that, if she told the truth, they would condemn her. She blushed when she thought how entirely her uncle and aunt would change their opinion of her, if they knew her heart and mind. They would think that she was a hypocrite!

"It's time to go to bed, my dear," her aunt's voice said outside the door.

"Come in, please."

Mrs. Watson entered, smiling.

"You must not stay up so late, Amélie. By and by, when you go out to parties, you will have no complexion at all."

"I don't want any complexion, Aunt Anne," answered Amélie, choking down a sob. "I hate parties;—but I'm a hypocrite,—that's all!"

Mrs. Watson looked at Amélie's tear-stained face in amazement. She sat down in the big arm-chair, and drew her niece to her.

"You're morbid, my child."

"I don't know what you mean, aunt; but I do know that I am bad. I did try to show off—I did try to appear better than my cousins—I——" Amélie broke down, to sob on her aunt's shoulder.

"You shock me, child!"

"I knew you would hate me if I told you, but I had to tell!"

"Don't worry. The girls must have done something to you to make you feel——"

"Oh, I don't want to find fault with them,—that would not excuse me."

Mrs. Watson shook her head. "They are so thoughtless,—but they are only little girls yet. You mustn't mind. What did they do?"

"Papa never liked me to wear black," faltered Amélie, "and——"

"I see. Some unkind remarks. I do not seem to have much control over my daughters. I am sure I wish they would always be gentle and kind. If they were, I am sure it would help to bring their father nearer to the Church. If we were rich they would be better satisfied, but we are not, and there are so many richer people about them. I am sure I don't know what *is* the matter," said Mrs. Watson, helplessly. "Now, go to bed, my dear, and forget all about it." She kissed her niece affectionately, and left the room.

It was too late to read in the New Testament or "The Following of Christ," so Amélie said a hearty act of contrition before the crucifix: "I will be good; I will be patient; I will help Aunt Anne as well as I can," she said; and then sleep bore her away to dreamland.

XII.

THE NOTE.

A WEEK passed. Notwithstanding the objections made by Mrs. Watson that the heat made it "impossible," Bob insisted on taking Amélie, not only up to the interior of the dome of the Capitol, but to the top of the Washington Monument. Amélie did not find all this very easy work, but she had learned to like Bob, and she found pleasure in pleasing him. The manner of her cousins became more and more distant. Alice whispered several times to Clara that "the country girl was trying hard to please." And once, when she offered to help Mrs. Watson with her sewing, Clara said aloud that she "hated hypocrisy." Amélie's sympathies were with Mr. Watson, who seemed very weary when he came home in the evening. There was, as a rule, always something unpleasant awaiting him. If the cook had

been cross, or Alice found her music more difficult than usual, or Clara's friends had not called, as they promised,—Mr. Watson was promptly told of it. Amélie had been brought up in a different school, the practise of which was to reserve the pleasantest bits of talk for the dinner-table. She had loved her father so intensely, that his face became like an open book to her. She could read his thoughts by every change of expression. She wondered why the girls did not see that their father loved them so much that the slightest attempt on their part to please him would have made him very happy. Mindful, however, of her failure to be true to herself, she did not censure her cousins even in her thoughts. She was an energetic girl, and she had been trained in a school which holds that the best recreation is a change of work. She liked to dust the furniture and bric-a-brac in the drawing-room, and she would have enjoyed the work of helping Mrs. Watson to do her marketing, but she did not dare to suggest it. Her own piano,—a little upright,—was sent to her, and she played during the time stipulated for by Sister Angela, in her own room. The Watson piano was a Steinway, bought in the days of Mr.

Watson's greater prosperity, but her cousins did not ask her to use it.

Alice and Clara were, in some respects, too old for their years,—the artificial point of view which no girl should have, had been acquired by them. For instance, they judged other people by their clothes ; richness of material and fashionable cut attracted their preference at once. Clara, young as she was, was all for style, and she had a very poor opinion of the people next door because little Mark, their negro servant, did not wear a blue suit with brass buttons, as their " boy " did, after the manner of Inez Fawcett's little groom.

It would be unjust if the impression was given that Amélie had naturally a good temper. In fact, since she had made her first confession, her chief struggle had been against fits of rage and impatience which are generally characteristic of proud and sensitive persons. There was one great redeeming trait in Amélie ; she had learned what very few young people learn, practically,—that her religion must be *lived ;* and she tried to live to it.

Amélie's guardian allowed her a sufficient amount of money for all necessary expenses and reasonable amusements. Economy with her was a

matter of choice not of necessity. Of all qualities, this was most despised by the Watson girls, who made up their minds at once that Amélie was wretchedly poor because she and Bob divided their expenses and "settled up" carefully after their numerous trips.

Amélie, strong in her belief that she must practise humility, since she had "shown off" so outrageously, was gentle and quiet in the presence of her cousins. She did not, as a rule, meet them at breakfast, as she and Bob went out into the country for a trolley ride very early. Luncheon was a moveable meal,—so that it was only at dinner the whole family met. The weather had grown cooler, and Mr. Watson, when he came home, seemed more cheerful than usual. Alice and Clara, who had come down in pretty pink frocks, seemed rather tired of life. But this expression was quite habitual with them, in the presence of their father, except when he gave them money or promised them some indulgence they asked for. Bob was in high spirits; he and Amélie had been at Georgetown College, and one of the Fathers, to whom Amélie had a letter, had shown them many interesting things.

"I shall take you all to the Band Concert to-morrow night," Mr. Watson said.

"We'll have to have dinner earlier," said Mrs. Watson, in a complaining voice. "Cannot we hear the Marine Band from the grounds by staying at home? I often hear it."

"No; and it wouldn't hurt cook to have dinner an hour earlier."

"The people who go there are—everybody," said Alice. "It's so promiscuous!"

"I think you can go *anywhere*, I am willing to take you," said Mr. Watson. "This soup is good, real Gumbo. The cook has improved, mother."

"Oh, Amélie taught her to make it," said Mrs. Watson. Mr. Watson smiled amiably at Amélie.

Alice giggled.

"Miss Brown, our first teacher, used to say that domestic drudges don't find time for much else," she added in a whisper plainly heard by Amélie.

"The program looks well. There are three of my favorites down,—Mendelssohn's 'Swing Song,' Schubert's 'Serenade' and Wagner's 'Evening Star.' What do you think of that, Alice?"

"I don't know," said Alice. "I think that the

Marine Band is rather slow when it plays those old-fashioned things."

"I suppose you never heard of Mozart or Wagner?"

"Oh, yes, Sister Eulalie speaks about them sometimes, and there's a lecturer comes who talks about musicians; but I don't pay much attention."

There was silence, during which Mr. Watson looked disappointed, and Amélie, forgetting her resolution to efface herself, spoke:

"So you like Mozart, Mr. Watson?"

"Very much—that is, the Sonatas. The operas are more Italian than German, I think. If Mozart were an Italian, I think I should like 'Don Giovanni' better. Von Weber is more German. A man ought to follow the genius of his nation."

This was beyond Amélie's depth, and she said so, with a laugh.

"I don't know the difference. But I gather, from what I have heard at school, that Mozart could not help writing like the Italians, because they really made the opera."

"He improved on them. Do you sing anything of Schubert's?"

"No—I wish I could. The only German songs

I know are the 'Lorelei,' Abt's 'When the Swallows,' and an 'Ave Maria' in German, set to some music by Von Suppe."

"Do you know, my dear, I think I'll get down my old violin and try an *obligato* with you?"

Alice laughed. "It will be very funny, papa!"

"Do!" said Bob; "and I'll play the mandolin."

"Oh my!" said Clara, derisively.

"Well," said Bob, "we want some music, and you girls will never play when you are asked."

"Oh, my!" said Clara, more derisively.

"I don't know what arrangement of Schubert's 'Serenade' the leader of the Band will play tomorrow afternoon, but I think we shall enjoy it, as he is a man of excellent taste. It is strange that, although Schubert wrote in nearly all musical forms, his songs are the only compositions worthy of him."

"I wish I knew more of his songs. I wish I knew as much as you know about the composers," Amélie said, impulsively.

Alice and Clara looked at her in genuine surprise. They had never thought of their father as knowing anything except law.

"Father Garland tells me that the choir of St.

Aloysius' is to give two fine Masses in October; it will be a great pleasure to talk them over with you. One can learn so much!"

Mrs. Watson looked uneasy.

"I should like you to explain some parts of Mozart's 12th to me——"

"I never go to Mass," said Mr. Watson, coldly.

"But you must, if you want to know what great music is!" exclaimed Amélie.

Mr. Watson looked grim. Then he caught a glimpse of the dismay on Amélie's face, and smiled.

"A humble pupil, you are!" he said, laughingly. "And yet I believe you're right. I have never heard Mass sung in a church."

Mrs. Watson seemed very much relieved. At this moment, Mark came in with a note for Alice.

"The boy wants an answer."

"May I read it, mamma?" asked Alice.

"Certainly, my dear—if it is urgent."

"It is about the lawn-party at 'The Oaks,' I'm sure."

With an expectant smile, Alice opened the note and read it. Her countenance changed.

"It's disgusting!" she said. "Mamma, you'll

have to answer it. I can't, To think of—of—of that girl being preferred to me! I'll never speak to Inez Fawcett again!"

Alice sobbed, drew out her handkerchief and rose from the table. In amazement, Mrs. Watson asked Mark to bring the note to her.

XIII.

THE NOTE IS READ.

Up to this moment, Amélie had really enjoyed herself. She was interested in all things musical, and she felt, too, that she was pleasing her uncle —and she wanted very much to please him. She had, too, the knowledge that she was not trying to "show off." When Alice left the table in tears, Amélie foresaw some new misfortune.

"It's perfectly heartless!" Alice was heard exclaiming in the drawing-room.

"What is it?" asked Mr. Watson, rather impatiently.

"Inez Fawcett writes:—'My Dear Alice—Mrs. Beaver has sent me only two cards for the open-air performance of "Le Miracle des Roses," at "The Oaks;" and, as there are some members of the diplomatic *corps* to be of the party, she wants me to invite a girl who speaks the languages. Now, you dear old thing, you know you

don't. So I thought, with your mother's permission, I would call for your cousin, who seems rather a showy girl, and not at all like a country mouse, on Thursday, at 3:30. We go out by train. You don't mind, I am sure.

"'Your own Tootsy,

"'INEZ.'"

"What is Alice crying about?" asked Bob. "The Fawcett girl doesn't want her—that's all."

"Boys are *so* hard-hearted," said Clara. "Why, Inez is Alice's friend!"

"Her own 'Tootsy!' Oh, my!" Bob exclaimed, laughing. "Well, if anybody called me 'Tootsy,' I'd smash his head."

"Don't be so rude! I should be ashamed to 'cut out' a girl's friend the way some people have done," Clara said, sarcastically, with a glance at Amélie. "Alice may not know languages, but she would not do *that*."

"My dear," Mr. Watson asked, with a look of repressed wrath in his eyes, "May I ask what all this means? Alice in tears, Clara openly attacking her cousin, and a foolish, but harmless, note from Inez Fawcett!"

"It is all my fault, uncle," said Amélie, before her aunt could speak. "I have already spoken of it——"

"To *me*," Mrs. Watson said; "and, I confess, if there were any fault, it seems to me it was a very slight one. Amélie overheard something that had been said, and she tried to show that she was not quite ignorant; and Inez Fawcett thinks she is more presentable than Alice."

Amélie blushed. Mr. Watson groaned. "If Alice paid more attention to study, Inez might not have thought so. I notice that Alice does nothing but grumble about school, and even if Sister Eulalie finds fault with her, she does not hesitate to pose as a martyr."

"Uncle," said Amélie, in a low voice, "I don't know more than Alice; I only made Inez think so. I had a German governess for a few months —a sweet, young girl, who had no friends—and she taught me some German songs. Of course, I speak French; I couldn't help that. I am so—so sorry!—so very sorry!"

"Ask Mark to bring in the coffee, my dear. This sort of thing spoils one's dinner. Don't cry, Amélie, for goodness' sake! One perpetual fountain of

tears in the house is enough; and Alice supplies that. Do you want to go to this lawn-party?"

"Oh, no," said Amélie: "besides, I have not been out since papa's death."

"He has been dead over a year," said Mrs. Watson. "I really think Amélie ought to go. Inez will not like it if she does not, and will probably not come here again. And she is a very desirable acquaintance for the girls."

"I beg your pardon," answered Mr. Watson, decidedly, "but I don't think so."

"Oh, papa!" exclaimed Clara. "She is the most stylish girl we know!"

"She goes into the best society in Washington," said Mrs. Watson. "There! I hear her voice in the drawing-room now! She has probably driven over to make things right."

"Who taught you those German songs?" Mr. Watson asked, evidently irritated, and wishing to change the subject.

"Miss Von Otto—Paulina Von Otto; she is teaching in a school in Richmond. She was so sweet and gentle; she had such a great sorrow in her life."

"I hope you will sing them for me when the mighty Miss Fawcett goes," he said.

XIV.

AMÉLIE'S TROUBLE.

MISS FAWCETT met Mrs. Watson and Amélie with great effusion. She wore a fluffy white dress, with a lace fichu, and a red hat over-burdened with poppies and cherries.

"I *do* hope I haven't disturbed you. Mrs. Beaver has just sent me, by a messenger, a third ticket; so dear Alice will not have to stay at home, after all. There's a large house-party at 'The Oaks,' and it's going to be the prettiest sight! If it rains, they'll sing 'Le Miracle des Roses' in the big hall. So wear your prettiest frock and hat, Miss Watson."

Amélie was not accustomed to being called "Miss," and she was, for a moment, silent.

"Oh, do you mean me?" she asked. "It's very kind of you to think of me, but I really cannot go."

"Why not?" asked Inez, amazed. "Your aunt doesn't object?"

"Oh, no, Inez," said Mrs. Watson.

"It is the swellest thing!"

"I like parties, of course," said Amélie; "but I have never gone to fashionable parties—in fact, I have never gone yet to any 'grown-up' parties."

"It is time you began," said Inez. "Why, when I was fourteen I went to dances."

"It is against *our* way," said Amélie, her color rising. "Father and Madame and Sister Angela said——"

"Oh, don't mind old fogies," Inez interrupted. "There'll be lots of young people there. All the performers in 'Le Miracle des Roses' are very young people. If you dress well, and perhaps sing a little song, you'll be a great success."

Inez spoke in the most assured and patronizing manner. "It's a great honor to be asked to Mrs. Beaver's, if you only knew it."

"Mrs. Beaver doesn't know me from Adam," said Amélie. "I do not want to be fashionable. I am only a young girl still—not a young lady; and I wish you hadn't noticed me at all!"

"Amélie!" Mrs. Watson said, warningly.

"Oh, I know, aunt, I have done nothing but make mistakes since I have come here! There was always father, or Madame de Guérin, or Sister

Angela to tell me things before, but now I've got to depend on myself. I wish I were——"

Amélie paused; the truth that she had no home made her pause. It fell upon her heart like a clod upon a coffin. "I wish I were not here giving you all trouble!"

"You mean to say that you don't want to go to the swellest thing of the summer?" asked Inez, incredulously. "That you refuse *me?*"

"Yes," said Amélie, raising her head, and looking as stately as she could.

"Oh, *thank* you," said Inez, rising. "And you, too, Mrs. Watson. Alice was right when she said that her cousin was a 'raw, country girl.' I fancied she was wrong. I can understand what 'showing off,' means *now*. It will be a long time before I trouble *you* or Alice or Clara with invitations again."

"My dear Inez!" began Mrs. Watson.

"Don't bother about her, mother!" cried Bob, from the depths of the great basket-chair. "She is only pretending to be a young lady; I know *her*. Young ladies don't talk that way. If Alice or Clara want to go to this grown-up party, they can go with Belinda Murray, in North Capitol Street."

"Belinda isn't asked," said Inez, descending from her height, to combat an assertion which seemed to her to be monstrous. "I don't believe it."

"She is asked to sing in a duet. She hates it, but she has to go because her music teacher is a friend of Mrs. Beaver's, and Mrs. Beaver had to give her three tickets. Belinda's the only little girl who knows the part. There, now! There are other people just as 'swell' as you. 'Tootsy!' Oh, my! 'Tootsy!'" And Bob apparently twisted himself into a knot of laughter.

"Good-bye," Inez said, freezingly. "I shall not call soon again. My mother and I will leave cards, of course, in the Fall. I regret that Alice should have proved to be such a false friend."

Mrs. Watson could not prevent Inez' dignified exit. The end of her fichu caught for a moment in the arm of Bob's chair.

"Wait, Inez," he said, "till I get a broom to sweep the dust of this house from the soles of your feet."

Inez pretended not to hear him, but sailed majestically from the room.

"It's all my fault! All my fault!" Amélie said.

Her aunt said no word to comfort her.

XV.

THE BOY OF THE WATER-LILIES AGAIN.

AMÈLIE went up to her room. The light had almost faded. She could hear her aunt scolding Bob for his rudeness. And yet Bob was the only one in that house who loved her! Troubled as she was, she could not help laughing as she thought of his funny accent on the sentimental "Tootsy." She lit the candle on the toilet table, as a way of relieving her loneliness, for she disliked the gray of the twilight; it always made her sad. She would go away! She could not endure this continual coldness and discontent. What had she done? Nothing much—only yielded to a little impulse of vanity and anger. But the words "vanity" and "anger" made her pause. She was sorry—so sorry! She knelt for a moment and made an Act of Contrition. Nevertheless, even if God had forgiven her, she thought the consequences remained. The quarrel which

had just occurred had come through her attempt to show off. Alice would never forgive her for it. Clara would dislike her for it. Mrs. Watson would perhaps think that she was a mischief-maker, and Mr. Watson, who evidently wanted peace, would see her in the light of a person who broke up the peace of his house. It might be her duty to live with these people; but, for her own comfort, she had better go away—somewhere—and take Bob! No, she could not do that. She would go alone—out into the world! She saw herself, as in a picture, wandering about, and perhaps dying in a snow-storm, on the steps of a brownstone house, with Alice and Inez and everybody looking at her pathetic face, and saying that they were sorry! Tears came to her eyes as she saw all this; and, then, the angels would bear her up—or, perhaps they would—— A glance at her "Following of Christ" restored her to common-sense. Her little book lay open, and as usual, she read the first passage on which her eye fell. It is in the chapter called "A Peaceful Man:"

"It is no great thing to be able to converse with them that are good and meek, for this is

naturally pleasing to all. And every one would willingly have peace and love those best that agree with them.

"But to live peacefully with those that are harsh and perverse, or disorderly, or such as oppose us, is a great grace, and highly commendable and manly."

So she must stay. "Manly" meant "womanly" too, in this case. In the story-books, when a girl came among people who did not like her, she always taught them to love her in a very short time. They discovered her good qualities and admired her because she sang or played or read better than they. These cousins of hers seemed different,—they were certainly different from anybody she had met in story-books or in real life. They were not exactly "harsh," or "perverse," or "disorderly;" but it certainly would not be easy to live with them; yet she must stay, and do her best.

There was a dim light in the drawing-room, which was long and narrow, with a polished floor, on which, in summer, no rugs were allowed to lie. Only one of the burners in the chandelier was lit. Amélie made her way to the bay-window. The heat had abated, and a cool breeze blew from the

south. The dome rose in the soft moonlight, white, resplendent, the symbol of a nation's prayer. Amélie almost forgot her worry in the beauty of the scene. She went to the piano and softly sang "Die Lorelei,"--very softly, for she did not want anybody to hear her.

"Ich weiss nicht was soll, es bedeuten,
Dass ich so traurig bin."

The melody comforted her. She was lost in it. Suddenly a child's voice below the window aroused her.

"Fraülein, what for you always play 'Die Lorelei?"

Amélie went to the window. A small boy, wearing an odd little cap, stood within the small inclosure that was called "the lawn."

"Because I like it," said Amélie, composedly, "and because somebody I like very much taught it to me."

"And I also!" said the boy. "It is odd if you do not the German language speak also?"

"I wish I could speak the German language, but I can't. I can only sing some songs in German."

"Ach, so—so!"

"What is your name?"

"Heinrich."

Amélie touched the piano again, and sang very softly the first stanza of the song.

"It is *schön*,—so *schön*. Did you ever meet my sister? Ach, no! What am I saying? She is dead—more than two years ago. We came from Germany. But—may I come some time to listen? I will bring you water-lilies when I go out to the pond. And I thank you! My sister sung 'Die Lorelei,' so often! It was good to hear her! Good-by,—I must go!"

And the little figure, in the queer blouse and cap, stepped into the darkness.

The episode made Amélie forget herself. Who was the boy? When Bob came in for his usual game of checkers before bed-time, he informed her that it was doubtless the same boy who had, one afternoon, left water-lilies at the door.

XVI.

ON THE TERRACE.

If Amélie had hoped that she and her cousins might soon be friends, she was disappointed. At breakfast, the day after Inez Fawcett's visit, they scarcely spoke to her. Mrs. Watson appeared to be very nervous. She endeavored to make up for her daughters' coldness by filling Amélie's plate with waffles and making her eat two poached eggs. Bob was full of a picnic he had secretly planned for a long time. Clara and Alice were at first the sole repositories of this great project, but gradually, he had, under the strictest pledges of secrecy, confided to twelve different persons, including their neighbor, Belinda Murray, although Bob ruefully said that "she could never hold her tongue."

It was a great relief for Amélie to get away from her cousins for her usual walk on the terrace of the Capitol. She loved this walk in that beau-

tiful place. The view of Pennsylvania was obscured by the foliage-laden trees, which made the surrounding grounds a bower of varied shades of green. The glossy magnolias and the various species of oak, with a great black-walnut tree, were Amélie's speciaél friends. This morning, heavy-hearted as she was,—for Amélie wanted to be loved by everybody,—the blue sky and the waving trees gave her some consolation. Besides, there were two letters in her hand, given her by the postman just as she left the house. She sat down on the stone coping about the oblong plant beds on the terrace and looked at her beloved letters. The writing on one was Susan's. She knew the shaky sprawling hand; she herself had taught Susan to write. The other was in Miss Von Otto's elegant manner. She opened Susan's first.

"Dear Chile," it ran. "We offers our prayers for you every day. The children are all well. The watermelons in our patch are as red as beets when you open them. Your crape-myrtle tree is in bloom; it always done bloom when the watermelons come. Don't catch cold. Be careful what you eat in Washington. The cullud trash don't

know how to cook there. The fambly sends love. The grapes will soon be ripe; you must hab some.

"Your ole mammy,

"SUSAN."

Amélie laughed. It was just like Susan—dear old Susan! She wasn't stylish, like Inez Fawcett; she could scarcely read or write; but she could be a better friend. Dear old Susan!

"My dear Amélie:" Miss Von Otto wrote. "You are, I trust, still singing your German songs with the accent—the real Hanoverian accent I taught you. That one, 'Die Lorelei,' is very dear to me. My little brother loved it so. After the dear mother's death I used to sing him to sleep with it. The night before the shipwreck I sang it to him. I have talked to you so often about it! He was a big boy—dear little Heinrich!—he thought; but, big as he was, he always wanted to hear mother's lullaby before he slept. Nobody dreamt of accident, though there was a fog. There is always a fog off Newfoundland. I had just left him to go on deck when the crash came. I must have fainted, for I was wounded slightly by a falling plank. I awoke, to find myself in a boat, with

many other people. The steamer had gone down. Of twenty-four persons in our boat, none had heard of my dear boy. Since then, nobody has heard of him. Is he dead? Everybody tells me he is dead. If he is dead, he is with the good children about our Lord, for he was a good child. He had, dearest Amélia, made his First Communion. But something in my heart tells me that he lives. You will travel much to big cities, while I, for years to come, will teach my pupils far away from crowds. I send you a photograph of my little brother. If you should ever see him, —oh, how foolish I am! But here is the picture for you, dear heart; for, of course, you will never see him on earth. And yet the dear Lord can do all things! His Mother found Him in the Temple after her long search. And I may find the boy! If I knew he was dead and with God, I would not weep; but to fear that he may be with bad men. Amélie, my dear, it maddens me—the thought!

"*Auf wiedersehen!* Write, dear child; ah, if you should meet my boy in the great city! Pardon my foolishness. Be simple and kind, my dear, and pray much. *Auf wiedersehen!*"

Amélie's eyes were moist when she had finished this. She did not open the thin square packet the letter contained, but thrust it into the net bag she carried in the mornings. She would look at the picture later. How quickly all small troubles vanish when one meets with a great one, she thought. And Miss Von Otto's sorrow made all the petty things that had annoyed her seem very small. What did the lawn-party, Inez Fawcett's haughtiness, her cousins' coldness, matter, in comparison with a loss like her friend's?

"I wish I could help her!" she said aloud, fervently. "I wish I could help her!"

XVII.

BELINDA.

"HELP who?—I mean 'whom?'"—said a voice behind her.

Amélie turned. Behind her, her hands full of wild carrot blossoms and sprays of the clematis virginiana, was a girl of about fourteen years of age, who had very merry, sparkling bright eyes. Her hair was almost yellow; it hung down her back in one long braid, tied with red ribbon; she wore a blue lawn frock and a red Cuban felt hat.

"You don't know me? but I'm your neighbor, all the same. I'm Belinda Murray."

"I am very glad to see you," said Amélie, rising. "I have heard your name mentioned."

"You didn't hear any good of me, I'm sure of *that*," answered Belinda. "The Watson girls don't like me. Of course, I'm only a little girl, while they're *young* ladies. Oh, my! I'd give a hollow laugh, if I could. If my name was 'Mae,'

L. of C.

or 'Edythe,' and I wore long skirts, they'd be different. There's only *one* in that family, and that's Bob. Arthur wasn't bad, but he never let you forget that he was going to West Point."

"I never heard anybody speak unkindly of you," Amélie said, gently. "I am sure my cousins would not."

"Oh, wouldn't they?" said Belinda, smiling. "Bless you, they're the stuck-up-edest girls! I don't see how you get on with them. Why, Clara's only my age, but she wears long frocks—oh, yes!—whenever she can, and a 'rat' in her hair. Now, I play with dolls—sometimes!" added Belinda, evidently expecting to see Amélie turn pale.

"So do I," said Amélie, laughing. "I have one in my trunk."

"I knew I'd like you," said Belinda. "I saw you pass our house in an automobile. Bob said you were *awfully* rich because you rode in an automobile."

Amélie laughed.

"I couldn't help it;—I am not rich at all."

"No?" Belinda paused. "It's strange what ideas we get. Now, when I was younger I thought

only rich people had gold in their teeth. Do you really play with dolls sometimes? What sort of a doll have you in your trunk?"

"A Parisian doll. A dear friend gave it to me. I'll show it to you."

Belinda smiled. "You are a dear! Do you know Inez Fawcett?"

Amélie's face changed. The name brought her into another world.

"Yes."

"Another stuck-up. Your cousins like her because she is stylish. She was the first girl in school to wear a silk skirt,—she needn't put on airs. I knew her when she wore short dresses. She isn't even a graduate!"

"You mustn't talk about people that way, my dear."

"The idea of your talking to *me* that way," said Belinda, her bright eyes fixed on Amélie. "I can see by your face that you are only *trying* to like Inez Fawcett and your cousins. If it weren't a secret, I'd tell you all about Bob's picnic. Oh,—are you going to hear me sing at Mrs. Brewer's?"

"No."

Belinda looked at Amélie sharply; she had very keen eyes.

"Grandmamma doesn't know Mrs. Brewer; but as I'm the only girl in town just now that can sing a part in 'La Petite Bergère,' my music teacher wants me to do it. I have three tickets. Don't you want to go?"

"No, thank you." Amélie looked into Belinda's frank, kindly face. A thought came to her, and a flush stole over her face. "Belinda, I know some persons who do."

"Suppose you take the tickets then. It's not an invitation affair; really, you can give your tickets to anybody. Grandmamma can't go,—I'm going with Mrs. Holliwell,—she's a great friend of your aunt's."

"Thank you. But, Belinda, I want the tickets for my cousins."

Belinda frowned.

"Oh, let Inez Fawcett take *them*."

"I know that I shouldn't ask a favor on such a short acquaintance, but——"

"Oh, I like you! You'll really show me your doll?"

Amélie nodded.

"Here are the tickets!" Belinda drew two white envelopes from a capacious pocket in her frock.

"I must ask another favor. Will you send them yourself?"

Belinda frowned.

"You don't know how airified they are to me sometimes. I'd hate to do it."

Amélie was silent for a moment. "I think," she said, "that they would be more pleased to get them from you than from me."

"*I* don't want to please them. But I'll send them."

"Belinda," said Amélie, "I'll not only show you the doll,—I'll give it to you. It not only talks, but it has fifteen dresses in a cunning little box."

Belinda sat down on the coping, and stared at Amélie.

"Honest?"

"Honest!"

"Glory! I'll not only send the cards by our boy as soon as I get home, but I'll write 'Miss Allys Watson' on the envelope. I hate to do it; it will set her up so much;—but I'm not a girl to

do a thing by halves. When will you show me the doll?"

"This afternoon. I'm going with my uncle to the Band Concert at half-past five,—do come before that."

"I'm going too. Come to breakfast with me now."

"I've had breakfast."

"Too bad. You're the kind of girl grandmamma likes. She likes girls' girls. Now I'm a boys' girl. I can play base-ball!"

"We played base-ball sometimes at the convent."

"Not the nuns?"

"Oh, no! What an idea!"

"I thought nobody but me liked base-ball. You're not so old-timey as I thought. I'm the only girl. Fred's at Annapolis. Grandmamma and I are all alone in the world."

"Poor little girl!" Amélie said, involuntarily.

Belinda looked startled and half-resentful; but the softness of Amélie's eyes disarmed her. She turned away.

"I am taking these flowers to a poor lady. I got them in the fields. We help poor people

in our neighborhood,—you'll have to join our circle. We're going to have a good time on Saturday,—but it is a secret."

Amélie smiled as she thought of Bob's secrets.

"Let's walk home together," Belinda said.

XVIII.

RATHER VIOLENT!

AMÉLIE was in high good humor with herself when she entered her uncle's house. She made out, in her mind, her programme for the forenoon. She would practise the scales and the "Polka de la Reine" for an hour; and then, for half an hour, Bach's First Prelude. After that, she would read Schubert's biography in "The Great Composers," and perhaps Beethoven's. It would be pleasant to know something more of the composers of the music the Marine Band would play. What a lovely morning she could have! Piano practise was hard—but music is such a good friend! she thought. Later, she could ask her aunt to let her try a new dessert. Her cousins need not know anything about it—and Bob had promised to turn the ice-cream freezer for her.

Belinda had graciously given her a bunch of

clematis, and she went into the drawing-room to find a vase for it.

Alice and Clara were lounging in the window seat.

"This city is the hottest place in the world just now!" Clara said. "I do wish we were out of it. Nothing pleasant to do!"

"Bob's picnic on Saturday," said Alice, sarcastically.

"And the only pleasure we could have *that* girl has spoiled by quarrelling with Inez Fawcett. It's too bad! She'll never come here again. And she's so much 'in' everything. She'll come 'out' this winter, and we'll not be asked. But she wouldn't ask any girls that don't wear long frocks."

At this moment Amélie entered.

"Oh, it's you!" said Alice.

"Pardon me. May I have the Carlsbad vase for these flowers?"

"Oh, yes—certainly; but I wonder that you have the impudence to speak to me after what you've done."

Amélie went to the chimney-piece, and stood with her back to her cousins. There were one or two sprays of clematis in the vase. She arranged

the others. Her first impulse was to smash the vase, and then leave the house forever. She was not, by nature, gentle. She remained silent.

"You've turned our dearest friend from us, and spoiled the only pleasure we are likely to have this summer!"

"I did not mean—" began Amélie. "Alice, I am sure that your mother understands——"

"Stuff and nonsense!" said Alice. "You come here, in an automobile, just to show off, and make people believe you're rich. You go on showing off, and you cut us out with Inez—and then you just spoil everything!"

Amélie, restraining herself, continued to adjust the clematis.

"You won't answer back, of course. We're not worth notice!" put in Clara.

Amélie bit her lip.

"I don't see why you came here, anyway. If you were stylish, or took an interest in us, it would be different; but you don't!" said Clara. "We depended on Inez Fawcett; she's the swellest girl we know."

"What can I do?" asked Amélie, facing them. "I *must* stay here; I have no home."

Clara was silent, startled.

"I am not a city girl; I am not used to what you call 'style' in girls of our age. I am old-fashioned, I suppose; but," she added, bitterly, "I don't want to be like you. You pretend to love your father, but you don't. You never help your mother. You grumble, you are discontented. You take what your father works for in ungratefulness. I'm not good, I know; but I tried to make life happy for my dear father. You want to be rich and 'swell,' as you call it, when you ought to be only young girls, trying to be useful. Oh, you needn't interrupt me. I'm not an ideal girl, I know it; but I'd sweep the streets all day rather than be like you—there, now!"

Amélie walked out of the room into the hall, blind with anger. She almost fell over Belinda Murray, who was standing near the open door.

"Well, I never!" she said. "I really never! It was just what I'd like to tell the Watson girls myself, only I haven't the gift. But I'll go in for education, if it can help you to do that. Oh, my!"

Amélie caught her by the arm.

"Belinda, little Belinda," she said, beginning

to cry. "I'm a bad girl, and I've given you bad example. I can't say any more—just now!"

"I thought I'd run in, after I gave the flowers to the poor lady, and drop the cards on the Watson girls. Say, you'll be well enough to show me the doll this afternoon, won't you? I wouldn't let a little thing like this bother me!"

Amélie had gone upstairs before she finished the last words.

"Dear me!" said Belinda, entering the drawing-room. "That's what I call eloquence. It's just what you girls ought to hear often. The whole neighborhood says the same thing, but you don't hear it. Here are your old cards for Mrs. Brewer's lawn-party. *She* made me do it!"

Alice opened the envelope.

"For us?"

"She asked me to give them to you. Mrs. Holliwell will take us all."

"*She?*" asked Alice.

"Your cousin Amélie."

"Belinda!"

"And she pays herself for it by insulting us!" said Clara. "We don't want the cards!"

"All right!" said Belinda. "I'll take them

back with pleasure. You ought to be ashamed to have such a nice cousin, and to treat her—like an animal. If you keep on everybody will hate you. I've always said that you were not so disagreeable as people said you were."

"*She* asked you for these?"

"I always tell the truth, Alice."

"I don't understand her."

"You haven't tried,—perhaps—well—I've said enough."

"We're much obliged," said Alice, with a quick look at the angry Clara. "Of course we'll go."

"I'll go, too," said Belinda. "I'll just say this, though;—if you don't want Amélie in your house, grandmamma and I will take her in."

Belinda arranged her red hat,—she had a habit of taking it off, as if she were a boy when she entered a house. "If it weren't against a text in the Testament, I'd say they were fools," she muttered.

XIX.

AMELIE'S TEMPER.

"I WILL *not* stand this!" said Amélie, sitting flushed and angry in her room. "Oh, I wish God had given me a home! Not four walls like this!" she added, looking scornfully around her room. "But a home! a home!—where people lived. People who have homes ought not to want anything else!"

The little "Following of Christ" was open on her table. She knew the words, marked with the slender blue ribbon, by heart:

"*It is no great thing to be able to converse with them that are good and meek; for this is naturally pleasing to all. And everyone would willingly have peace, and love those best that agree with him.*

"*But to live peacefully with those that are harsh and perverse, or disorderly, or such as oppose us, is a great grace*——"

The reproach went to her heart. She had fallen below all her good resolutions. On the last Sunday at Communion it had seemed as if she could never lose her temper or be unkind or uncharitable,—her fervor had been so intense. Three days had passed; she had broken all her best resolutions. She had unpacked, the day before, a miniature of Dolci's "Ecce Homo." The little brass filagree doors in front of it were open. The eyes,—the sorrowful eyes,—seemed to follow her.

"You had no home," she said, "and yet *you* did not forget."

She looked around the room; she went to the window. The great dome of the Capitol was strong, resplendent, and the blue sky seemed to be bending to bless it. Surely, she ought to hope. What had she done? She had spoken insulting words to her cousins in their own house. She had reminded them of their duties while failing to remember her own,—while breaking her promises to God.

"Let them take it!" she said, with a renewed flash of anger. "Why can't they try to be nice to me? I hate the very ground they walk on! Oh, Susan,—your little house, and the sunflowers and

the hollyhocks are more to me than this beautiful place. Nobody loves me but you!"

She caught again the reproachful eyes of the "Ecce Homo." Turning abrupity, her eyes fell upon the other picture of the Sorrowful Mother. She could not escape God.

"What shall I do? What shall I do?"

Miss Von Otto would have said, "Work;" Sister Angela would have said, "Pray." She knelt a moment, and then, opening the piano, began Bach's First Prelude.

A half hour passed. In the meantime Belinda had been enjoying herself very much in the drawing-room.

"Yes," she had said, composedly, "you would not have had the tickets, if she hadn't asked for them. I never come to see you, you know,—I come to see Bob. I know that I'm not a young lady; I don't expect to wear long dresses for *ages*, but that's no reason why you should always snub me."

Alice was embarrassed. She was pleased to receive the tickets, and Belinda's words had more weight than they would usually have had.

"I expected more from Catholics," Belinda

went on. "When you moved into this neighborhood, I expected to find you better than other girls. My aunt was a Catholic, and she was kinder even than grandmamma; but you're not up to what I expected—there! Clara tells lies as fast as other girls!"

Clara blushed.

"Belinda, stop! It's not true!"

"I heard you say that Alice's last winter's coat was sent from Paris, and it cost ever so much, and that you were not going away because your father had ordered all your next winter's things from London! I heard you tell Inez Fawcett that, when I was practising 'Whispering Hope' with Alice."

Clara lowered her eyes.

"I call *that* story-telling. Besides, people find out. I went with grandmamma to the Children's Mass at your church once, and the priest said that young people should be truthful and simple. Your cousin is simple and kind; she made me give you those tickets. She'd love you very much if you'd let her. I wish I had a sister like her! Grandmamma said, 'You pattern after the Watson girls; they're very religious, you know.' Oh,

my! I just said to her, 'If I patterned after them, I'd be a Terrible Example.' That's the truth!"

Clara said nothing; she was ashamed.

There was something wistful about Belinda's expression, even when she said her worst. Alice, for the first time, felt that she was unworthy.

"Belinda," she said, rather awkwardly, "I will tell you a secret, for I want to be friends with you, and a better girl. Bob is going to have a picnic on Saturday. Will you come?"

"Why, he told me not to tell you!" Belinda exclaimed. Then they all laughed; and Clara hurried out of the room.

Amélie heard a soft knock at her door.

"Come in!" she called.

"Amélie," said Clara, "I am very sorry."

Amélie jumped up from the piano-stool. She faced her cousin in surprise.

"I am more sorry than you. Oh, Clara, I do want you to love me so much!"

And so the storm passed.

XX.

SOME MUSIC.

Bob carried a camp-stool over to the Capitol grounds for his father, who came home from the office very tired. Alice was gentler to Amélie, and Clara walked to the East Front of the Capitol arm-in-arm with her. Mrs. Watson was busy with the girls' frocks for Mrs. Beaver's lawn-party, so she could not join them.

"Stand next to papa; he likes to talk to you," said Clara, when the band had finished the overture to Verdi's "Macbeth."

"Did you hear the witches' cry?" asked Amélie, delighted with the music.

"Was it the witches' cry?" asked Mr. Watson, amused. "I'll have to read about Verdi, to find out. What's next?"

"A Sousa march," said Bob. "I hate Chopin and that sort of fellows. Where's Belinda?"

"I don't see her," answered Amélie; "she promised to come early."

"Three cheers for Sousa! I wish it was all Sousa, though Mr. Santelmann writes music just as stirring, too. Some people think it's better than Sousa's."

The steps of the Capitol were crowded with men, women and children—all silent, expectant, as the leader raised his bâton. Strolling groups crossed and re-crossed the green sward. Here and there, a colored boy cut a pigeon-wing, or threw a somersault. There were occasional bursts of laughter from the fringe of the promenading crowds, and at times too much talking, at which Mr. Watson frowned. The "King Cotton March" was played with great accuracy and dash. It was much applauded. Then came a selection from Rossini's "Otello."

Alice and Clara, standing near their father, listened with interest, instead of, as was their habit, commenting superciliously on the costumes of the "stay-at-homes" at the concert.

"What was it they played the second time?" asked Alice.

"An aria from Gluck's 'Orfeo,'" said Mr. Watson.

"This is so different from that," said Alice.

"This 'Otello' music is more like Wagner's 'Tannhäuser' music than it is like Gluck's. Gluck was Marie Antoinette's favorite composer. Music has changed in the last hundred years—especially operatic music. Rossini's 'Otello' helped to change things. Rossini prepared the orchestra for Wagner by adding all the new instruments; for, before his time, the orchestra had been made up mostly of strings."

"Strings!" exclaimed Bob, in amazement.

"I mean stringed instruments," explained his father.

"Yes, I know," said Amélie, much interested. "I remember that Madame de Guérin told me a story about that. Sigismondi was a composer of the old school. He was once, with Donizetti, then a young student, at the Neapolitan Conservatory, and Donizetti wanted to look at the score of 'Otello.' Sigismondi groaned when he saw the number of instruments Rossini had used. 'A hundred and twenty-three trombones!' he groaned —'a hundred and twenty-three trombones!' 'You are mistaken, Maestro,' Donizetti said; 'the score calls for first, second and third trombones—not a

hundred and twenty-three trombones!' But Sigismondi rushed away, calling out in horror, 'A hundred and twenty-three trombones!"

They all laughed.

"Really," whispered Clara, "I shall try to find music more interesting. I never thought there were stories about it, or that one composer had anything to do with another.

The music began again.

"Oh, here's Belinda!" cried Bob, just as the last soft strain of Schubert's "Serenade" died away. Belinda was flushed; she swung her red cap in her left hand; she looked as if she had been crying.

"I couldn't come for the doll," she said. "But I'll go home with you, after the music. The Ogress caught me!"

"She means her music teacher!" cried Bob, almost bending double over this delicious epithet. "Belinda's a peach! She says such funny things."

The concert ended with "Hail Columbia," when six more musical compositions had been played.

"Well, I've enjoyed myself," Mr. Watson said. "Girls, I am much obliged to you—and; Bob,

it was very kind of you to think of the camp-stool."

"Amélie thought of it," Bob said; "but, papa, I'll think of it every time, after this."

"Why do you like music so much?" asked Mr. Watson, addressing Amélie.

"I think I learned to like it by attending High Mass."

"And you really like to go to Mass? My girls are always glad when it's over."

"My father showed me how beautiful the Mass is. He said that, even if he were not a Catholic, that he would go to Mass, because it was the flower of all worship; because the heart, the mind, the senses, are all elevated. He said that—dear father!"

Mr. Watson was silent.

"Girls," he said, "if you will take me to Mass next Sunday, I'll try to find out whether my brother was right. Will you take me, Clara?"

"Of course we will!" said Clara, delighted; for she and Alice prayed every night and morning that their father might be drawn nearer to God.

After dinner, Belinda went to Amélie's room; she explained the cause of her detention.

"The Ogress is Mrs. Jacques, you know. She came just as I was going to see the doll! 'You'll learn how to make a courtesy for the party,' says she. 'I won't,' says I. 'People in society expect good manners,' says she. 'A low bow is "old-timey,"' says I. 'You'll do it all the same,' says she. I was as awkward as I could be. She tried and tried. At last she stopped, and said she'd come to-morrow; and grandmamma called out from her room that I was impudent to her—Ogress!"

"Don't say 'Ogress;' don't call nicknames. Don't—please, Belinda! You've been so good to-day. You made Cousin Clara be very good to me because you were kind about the tickets."

"Did I?" said Belinda, pleased. "I am so used to being called bad that I'm surprised when I'm good. If you want me to, I'll surprise myself some more."

"When you've seen the doll, I'll teach you how to courtesy. We learned it at the convent. Who knows, you may be presented at Court some day!"

Belinda giggled.

"Where's the doll?"

Amélie lit the gas-burners, and opened the box that enclosed the precious doll.

"Oh!" she said; and again—

"Oh!" and again--

"Oh!"

Mademoiselle Bluette was a wonder of a doll. She was three feet high; her eyes were blue, shaded by brown lashes; her cheeks were softly pink; her lips of the red of the berries of the briar rose; her hair was real; it curled; it was tied in a knot on the top of her head by crimson ribbon.

"Bluette has a ribbon for every costume," said Amélia. "This goes with her red cashmere tea-gown."

"Oh!" said Belinda.

The arms of Mademoiselle Bluette were of kid; they could be moved by a spring; her eyes opened and closed; she could speak; her voice was not agreeable, but it was distinct.

"Papa," she said.

"Oh!" Belinda said.

"Mamma," she said.

"She talks as plain as a cat!" said Belinda, absorbed. "I mean her voice is like a kitten's."

Hats with plumes, bonnets with flowers, white and black gloves, a fan and a parasol, and all the various things that make up the wardrobe of a doll from Paris were displayed.

"I never saw anything like it," said Belinda. "I may be too big to play with dolls," she added, "but that doll will always be big enough to play with me! And it's all mine!"

"All yours."

Belinda looked almost awe-stricken.

"Teach me to courtesy," she said, eagerly. "I'll do anything for you, even try to please the Ogr—— I mean Mrs. Jacques."

XXI.

ON THE POTOMAC.

"LE MIRACLE DES ROSES" was performed; Alice and Clara went to the party, in their best frocks and hats, with Mrs. Holliwell. Inez Fawcett took no notice of them; Belinda sang her part, made a very graceful courtesy, and ate two plates of ice-cream. So far as Alice and Clara were concerned, the entertainment was a failure. The few young persons they knew avoided "the Watson girls" because they had not taken the trouble to be polite to anybody but Inez Fawcett.

"Our white dresses are as pretty as anybody's here," Alice had said. "The embroidery on Inez's is not so fine as ours."

"But poor mother is very tired to-day," said Clara. "I don't think the whole thing is worth *that*."

"Amélie's spoiling you," answered Alice, crossly. "You'll find yet that her goodness is

only on the surface. I wouldn't have her temper for the world."

"I wish I were home," said Clara, refusing the orange ice the servant offered. "It's all very pretty, but nobody speaks to us. I feel as if I had no right here,—I mean no right here because mother is working so hard at home."

"Amélie's nonsense!" sneered Alice.

At home everybody was at that moment very industrious; but Mrs. Watson was directing the work, while Amélie and Bob acted as her agents.

All the preparations for the picnic were concluded. Bob revealed the secret as solemnly as if there had really ever been a secret. Twelve persons were to be of the party. All Bob's Fourth of July money,—which he had not spent because he was ill,—was to pay for lemonade and cakes and pies, and cold chicken and ham;—a big turtle had been presented to him by Jack White, whose father had caught it,—an enormous green turtle. This was for soup, and Bob had arranged for corn, potatoes, onions, and all sorts of vegetables at the Point. The Point was a shady place, with a sparkling fern-rimmed spring, not far from Chief Justice Marshall's house

on the Potomac. The steamer touched at Marshall Hall, and "the Point,"—so named by Bob—was only a short distance from this historic place, but hidden from view by oaks and beeches of many years' growth. Mrs. Watson said, in spite of all entreaties, that she was too busy to go;—so the indefatigable Mrs. Holliwell, a widow, devoted to children, was to act as chaperon. The party, except Mrs. Holliwell, Jack White and Belinda, were Catholics; so Bob's programme, annotated by Amélie, included Mass at seven o'clock. Mark and Mrs. White's negro boy were to drive to the boat with a big tin boiler for the soup, and all the rest of the necessaries, so that the minds of everybody else could be entirely free from care.

The trip on the Potomac was delightful. Jack White, a tall, solemn, silent boy, stood on the upper deck with Amélie, and explained the sights in monosyllables.

"Alexandria," he said.

"George Washington went to church there," explained his friend, a short, but talkative, boy, Wallace Roche, who *would* lean over the railing in a way that frightened Amélie.

"There's a cloud over there!" called out one of the Golden twins.

"That Marie Golden is *always* making trouble!" cried Bob. "She just wants to spoil my picnic."

"But there *is* a tiny cloud over there," said Clementine Golden, who always agreed with her sister.

"If there is, it is not polite to see it," answered Bob, in an injured tone. "If it was the Goldens' picnic, I'd try to see the sun, if it was raining pitchforks."

"Where's Georgetown College? Papa went there to school. Where is it?" asked Amélie, eagerly.

"Over there; you can't see it well by this route," said Wallace Roche. "You can see it quite plainly from the Norfolk boat."

"When are we going to eat?" sang out Willie Golden, who was not a twin.

"Greedy!" said Bob. "Why can't you behave like a gentleman? We've got to admire the scenery before we eat. That's the proper thing."

"Mount Vernon! Mount Vernon!" cried everybody, after some time had gone by, during

which Mrs. Holliwell had been obliged to feed the minority with ham sandwiches.

The peaceful lawn and white-columned porch of Washington's modest house stood out, bright and clear, beyond the yellow stream. Bob took off his hat. All the other boys, did the same, except Willie Golden, whose mouth was full, as well as his hands. This prevented him from singing "The Star Spangled Banner," which Belinda struck up.

Amélie was silent. A feeling of deep reverence was upon her. Had the great President really looked, with his own eyes on the very river and banks on which she was looking? Was it possible that he and Mistress Washington had walked on that porch, entered their house by that door? How strange it was! How hard to believe!

"There's a garden over there," said Clara. "Somebody told me that some rose-bushes planted by Nellie Curtis are still there."

"Oh, how delightful!" exclaimed Amélie, her cheeks flushing. "And some day I shall actually enter that house myself?"

"Whenever you want to go," said Mrs. H well, amused. "Now, boys, we'll sing 'Dixie!'"

The tune was given with a will. Then Belinda began "Whispering Hope," and Alice took the second part—

> "Soft as the voice of an angel
> Breathing a whisper unheard."

"That reminds me of 'Die Lorelei,'" Amélie said, her eyes smiling on the happy group, in which Alice alone seemed distant and stiff. "Let us sing that." Nobody knew the German words, so she sang it alone.

A head slowly appeared above the stairway that leads to the upper deck of the steamboat. Gradually, the head advanced higher and higher. It was the head of a little boy, wearing a tight black cap. He seemed entranced by the music. When Amélie had finished, he jumped on the deck.

"Oh, schön—lieblich!" he cried.

Everybody laughed. He seemed to be so solemn, and yet so pleased; and his long blue blouse and black cap made him seem very quaint.

"A little German boy," said Amélie, laughing, too. "And he likes 'Die Lorelei!'"

But that funny little figure could not be Miss Von Otto's brother. Amélie wished that she had not forgotten to look at the photograph Miss Von

Otto had sent; but Belinda's sudden appearance on the morning she had received it had quite put it from her mind.

"Bis! Bis!" said the German boy, taking off his cap and bowing to Amélie, not at all embarrassed by the laughter. Perhaps he was used to it.

"It's the boy who gave us the water-lilies!" exclaimed Clara.

"The very boy!" said Alice, interested.

"Bis!" repeated the boy.

"Ja, mein herr!" she cleared her throat, and began "Die Lorelei" again, while Belinda improvised a very harmonious accompaniment with her lips.

"I thank you—and everybody," said the boy, with a bow that made Belinda envious. He went below, followed by three of the more curious children.

"His name's something German or other," Willie Golden said, returning. "He lives with a German farmer and takes care of the market produce the farmer sends to town every day. He's a nice kind of a boy, and he gave me a peach. He went to the city at three o'clock this morning to market. He can whistle all sorts of tunes."

"Didn't he tell you his father and mother's name? And did you ask him whether he had brothers or sisters? Or how much wages the farmer gives him?" asked Clara, sarcastically.

"I forgot," said Willie, regretfully, "but I'll go down and ask him."

The boat touched the wharf; the party, with much excitement and laughter, landed at Marshall Hall.

XXII.

THE WHISTLE.

"DEAR me!" said Alice, impatiently, pulling her pink lawn skirt about her, "some of these people are so rude! And Bob has gone off with my parasol,—my complexion will be ruined! I wish I hadn't worn my patent leather slippers; they pinch terribly. But a girl must look nice!"

"Not if she wants to enjoy herself at a picnic," said Belinda, who carried a large glass jar of lemonade; her bright red felt hat was pushed to the side of her head as usual.

Alice looked very dainty and pretty, but unhappy. Her shoes were slight, and the path was covered with big pebbles and tough grass. Her much-ruffled pink frock had been rumpled slightly in passing through the crowd on the wharf, and her straw hat was adorned with such expensive La France roses that she was afraid the fierce sunlight would cause them to fade.

"Do hurry, Amélie," she said. "Let's get into the shade. There's that ugly German boy about to speak to you!—Come on,—don't notice him!"

Amélie smiled and paused, detaining Alice gently.

"Fräulein," said the German boy, "I want to give this for thankfulness of your music."

He held his cap in his left hand, he presented her, with his right, a curious brass whistle shaped like a swan.

"Don't take that trash!" said Alice. "Come on!"

"It is a good whistle. There is only one other like it. It is a fine thing," said the boy seriously. "The other whistle was made for my sister, who is dead in the sea. It is engraved with flowers."

Amélie thanked him. She took from her pocket-book a silver medal of Lourdes, and gave to him.

"Thank you, Fräulein," he said. He picked up the big basket he had set down to speak to Amélie and disappeared. The whistle was exquisitely engraved with arabesques. Where had she seen it before and admired it?

"Why did you bring a shawl and that net bag of yours? Really, you are an object!" grumbled

Alice. "The idea of your being so polite to that boy. If you belonged to our circle for visiting the poor, you'd soon find out how impudent that set of people are. One girl I took some shoes to actually returned the call. I wish I had thrown the water-lilies in the face of that impudent boy!"

Amélie had some difficulty in holding her tongue.

The little procession winding towards the Point was preceded by Bob, who carried two great boxes of cake, protected by Alice's pink parasol, from which hung two sunflowers. The twins came next, with a hamper of pies between them. After them walked Willie Golden, carrying a big bunch of very yellow bananas, followed by Jack White, with two big pineapples. There was an interval. Then followed Amélie, carrying Mrs. Holliwell's shawl and the pepper, tea and sugar, which everybody else had forgotten. Alice walked, resplendent in pink lawn, with embroidery and rose-colored ribbons, but she walked with difficulty. Clara bore three long loaves of French bread tied with streamers of yellow tissue paper, and Jack White handled with care a big brown paper bag containing his mother's famous deviled crabs.

There were several stragglers ; then triumphantly came the black boys, with the turtle, the vegetables, the ice-cream freezer, Jack White's mandolin and Belinda's guitar, mounted on two wheelbarrows. Bob looked back at the procession, with great satisfaction.

"It's the bossest picnic ! I wish papa and mamma were here to see it ! "

The Point was deep in ferns. The oaks were bound together by Virginia creepers and the climatis, while here and there a yellow-red, trumpet-shaped flower showed among the climbing green. The tall ferns were reflected in the crystal stillness of the spring, and coolness and freshness made the spot delightful.

"It's pleasant, but where am I to sit down,—it looks damp," Alice said, drawing her delicate pink dress about her. Amélie meekly spread the shawl upon the ground, and Alice sank upon it.

"Oh," she wailed, suddenly, "I forgot the tea."

"It's in this bag—this despised net bag," said Amélie.

"I'm so glad ! I can't live without tea."

The black boys began to prepare the material for green turtle soup, made after a manner of their

own. The children gathered wood. And in half an hour the boiler was hung over a blazing fire, and the picnickers were jubilantly stirring the stew with newly-cut pine sticks.

Amélie made herself very busy. At last the white tissue-paper cloth was laid and the varied colored paper napkins nicely arranged near the spring. Then she blew her whistle. It had a sweet, loud tone. She held it in her hand musingly. Where had she seen one like it before?

XXIII.

THE RESCUE.

EVERYTHING went well. To be sure, the twins fell into the spring, but they were carefully dried; and Jack White was supposed to have swallowed a wasp in a slice of pie; but he was not sure of it. Alice grew very weary of the fun, because nobody paid her extraordinary attention, and wandered away. She did not even come back for the cold supper. As she had taken a novel with her, she forgot all about her companions. As she was not, as a rule, particularly agreeable, they easily forgot her.

Bob had stipulated that the party should remain for the last boat. The picnickers were dancing the Lancers in the moonlight, when the steamboat signal was heard. Time had fled so fast! The colored boys had gone off, with the loaded wheelbarrows, so there was nothing left to carry except

the guitar and mandolin, to whose music the dance was proceeding.

There was a scramble. Mrs. Holliwell hurried off with the younger ones; the rest followed. Amélie had gone only a few steps when she remembered Alice. She ran into the woods, calling. There was no response.

The moonlight whitened the spaces among the trees, and the swinging vine-garlands and waving leaves made delicate moving embroidery on the silvered ground.

"Alice!"

Amélie was desperate. The signal from the steamboat sounded again.

"Where are Alice and Amélie?" demanded Mrs. Holliwell, when all her other charges had been gathered on the upper deck.

"They'll take care of themselves," answered Bob, sleepily. "I saw Amélie coming, and there's a pink dress like Alice's over there near the wheel."

Again the warning note was sounded. The searchlight was turned from the pilot-house upon the banks. It lit up the barge in front of them so well that the children applauded.

"I suppose those girls are all right; I'll look for them, anyhow," said Mrs. Holliwell, as yet not at all anxious.

The steamboat glided from the wharf.

In the shadows, Amélie heard the signal again.

No; she would not go without Alice.

"Alice!"

No answer.

Amélie saw, by the brilliant searchlight suddenly cast upon her, that she was near the river. Through a vine-curtained opening in the trees, she saw, too, the steamboat moving towards the city.

"Bob, oh, Bob!" she called, frightened. "Stop, stop!"

Only echoes came back, though she could hear the movement of the steamboat's wheels in the water. A breath of the perfume of the late honeysuckle seemed to bring her to her senses. She was in the woods; it was night, but God was near. She must not be frightened, and she must find Alice!

Silence fell. There was a lull in all sounds. The frogs, in the distance, took up their chorus, and a cricket chirped. What was that? The

sound came from the river bank. Amélie shrank back in the shadow. She tried to make herself believe that her fears were foolish. She remembered that, when she was a child, she used to think that the round-backed mahogany chairs in her mother's room were lions. They were not lions; it was only the darkness. It was only the darkness that made her afraid now! Again came the sound—not of the frogs or the crickets; it was a low moan.

Boldly Amélie advanced to the bank of the river and looked down. The water was low—the depth seemed great.

"Alice!"

A moan was the response.

About twelve feet below the top of the bank Alice Watson lay—a heap of crumpled pink, her large, frightened eyes staring at Amélie. She was on a projecting ledge of earth, about three feet above the water.

"Amélie!—thank heaven! Get me up; I am almost mad! I saw the steamboat go. And you are the only one not cruel enough to leave me."

"They did not know."

"My hat fell, and I tried to get it. I had hung

it on that willow tree. Oh, what can we do? I have been here since six o'clock. I forgot you all in my book. Oh, how I have prayed?"

"Pray still," Amélie said. "I will go down to you!"

"It will do no good. I have thought it all over, Amélie. We can do nothing now. I am frightened to death; but I can't expect you to stay with me until we can get help at daylight. I have treated you so badly, that you'd be an angel if you took any trouble now——"

"Don't, Alice!—don't!" said Amélie. "Let's forget. The night is damp. There's Mrs. Hollywell's shawl. You've got it? Good!"

"What will you do? It *is* cold, and I think I have sprained my ankle. What will you do?"

"I haven't a thin pink dress on."

"But you have a thin white one."

Amélie did not answer. What could she do? She must find a way out! People might come, but what sort of people? She stood like a white statue guarding the girl below her.

Had not the children said that the German boy lived near the Point? The whistle! Why not try the whistle? She blew with all her might.

Its sound seemed to cut the air. Only the echoes answered. Again she blew. This time there was a faint hello! Her hands trembled with excitement; the whistle fell from them into the tangled grass on the bank. She tried to find it. The hello sounded again. She could not answer; the whistle was lost.

After all, it suddenly occurred to her, she had a voice. She began to sing "Die Lorelei."

There was a crashing among the branches, and from the clump of oaks came the German boy.

"Fräulein!"

"Yes," said Amélie. "Can you help us?"

"I live near," he said, going away. "It is well."

In five minutes he had returned with a ladder. He steadied it, Amélie held it, and Alice was lifted to the bank very gently.

"I will harness my horse; it is over there. I live near our farm in the house with the 'hands,' but we will not waken them. You are Catholic; I know, because you gave me the medal. I will drive you over to the priest's house, and you will be safe."

Alice, saying prayers of thanksgiving, leaned against a tree.

"I have lost my whistle," said Amélie. "It was a lucky whistle."

"Here it is," the boy said; his quick eye had espied it among the grass. "The other was my sister's. We were wrecked coming from Germany, and she was lost—my sister. I am so much alone in the land. I think of her so much that I love 'Die Lorelei'—her song. It is good that I can help you."

"And your name?" asked Amélie, half afraid of the answer.

"Heinrich Von Otto."

"Alice!" cried Amélie, "I have found him! It is Miss Von Otto's brother! Heinrich, your sister is not dead; she is living! She will be so happy!"

For a moment Heinrich seemed frozen.

"So?" he said. "So?"

He darted into the woods.

"Thank heaven, we are safe! Oh, Amélie! do forgive me! I see now how selfish I was!"

"And I how wicked I was, Alice."

"Kiss me, Amélie. Let me be a good sister. Oh, how kind you have been!"

Tears came to Amélie's eyes. People would love her, after all! She would have a home!

Heinrich's light cart was heard approaching. The boy had thoughtfully brought his overcoat for Amélie.

The drive to Father Egbert's house was a long and silent one. Heinrich felt that it was no time to ask questions. He knew that his sister lived; that was enough!

Father Egbert had not gone to bed yet. He was reading in his study. He gave the girls into the charge of his housekeeper, and drove off with Heinrich to find a telegraph station. That night two telegrams sped through the moonlight,—one to Mr. Watson; the other with the glad news to Miss Von Otto.

XXIV.

THE MAN WITH THE SWORD.

ALICE'S adventure was told and retold in the family, until Amélie found herself a full-blown heroine. Mr. Watson kissed her,—tears standing in his eyes,—and Mrs. Watson burst into sobs and blessings several times during the day after the return of the girls. But it was not until Belinda appeared, bright-eyed, excited, that Amélie knew how heroic she had been.

It was just before dinner, Amélie was in her room, happier than she had been since her father's death.

"Oh, Amélie!" cried Belinda, kissing her on both cheeks and looking as if she were about to cry, "I have heard it all! How could you do it? You must be as brave as a lion! Weren't you afraid?"

"I was afraid that Alice was lost,—she was really the brave one. She was so thoughtful, too.

She was afraid that I'd catch cold because I gave her the shawl."

"Well, that's a new thing for Alice," said Belinda tartly. And then, changing her tone, she said, "I always hated girls bigger than I am;—they're so set up, but you're different; you're just as nice as if you were little. Oh, how dreadful you must have felt! Willie Golden heard all about it from Bob, and Willie told Marié, and Marie told Wallace Roche, and Wallace told Grandmamma, who wouldn't believe it all. She thought Wallace was exaggerating;—I didn't. It must have been horrible!"

"Well, Belinda, I never prayed harder in my life,—never! When the steamboat whistle stopped, and I knew that I was alone, I—I did pray!"

"Did you pray in English?"

"Of course."

"I thought Catholics always prayed in Latin. I have often thought that it would keep me from being a Catholic. Grandma could never get me through the first declension."

"We say the 'Our Father' just as you do," said Amélie. "Of course Protestants think they

translated it from the Latin into English ; but it was in English long before Protestants existed in England."

"You don't mean to say that Catholics had it first," said Belinda. "You surely don't mean *that*."

"You must read history," said Amélie, laughing. "And the main thing is that we should say it often. Tell me, Belinda, about your club. You spoke of one for poor people the other day."

"Are you really interested? I thought perhaps that your cousins had prejudiced you against it. It's to help poor people. But, oh, Amélie, do tell me how you broke the big sword the man tried to cut you with?"

"What sword?"

"The sword the man had,—the man that came out of the wood and almost stabbed you. Wallace said that Alice fainted three times, and——"

Amélie looked amazed.

"Belinda——"

"And that, if the German boy hadn't rescued you with a pistol you'd been weltering in blood. Did he really cut a piece out of your shoulder?"

"There was not any man, Belinda. I do not know Wallace Roche——"

"But Bob told everybody all about it,—there must have been a man."

"No," said Amélie, seriously, "there wasn't. It was all very simple. Alice read, and forgot all about time and the picnic. I missed her, and found her. Good, little Heinrich's whistle came in there. That was the most wonderful part of the whole thing. After that no one can doubt that God watches over us! How hard poor Miss Von Otto had prayed!"

"But the mad dog, and your beautiful singing! Surely, that, too, was wonderful!" said Belinda, with shining eyes.

"A mad dog, a big man with a sword, and several fainting fits!—what next? Surely, you've been reading romances, Belinda?"

"No," said Belinda, "only listening to Wallace Roche. Why, you surely met the mad dog that was going to bite Alice, and made it stop by beginning to sing. Marie showed Wallace how the dog barked. It went this way," and Belinda gave an imitation that might have represented the howl of a hyena.

Belinda laughed until the tears came into her eyes.

"Oh, dear," she said, "Belinda, you will kill me! I see now how stories go,—I shall always divide everything bad I hear about anybody, if I have to listen to it, by twenty-four. How did Wallace invent such a tissue of absurdities."

"But you sang!" said Belinda, in a disappointed tone.

"Yes, I remembered Heinrich and blew the whistle. Then I was afraid he might not recognize the sound, so, as the night was still, I sang the 'Lorelei' as loudly as I could. He says that brought him. You shall meet him; he will be here to-morrow; he is going to see his sister, though his employer wants to keep him."

"I'm glad you sang," said Belinda. "I'm glad you did *something*, or there'd be no story at all!"

"Heinrich was found."

"Oh, yes, that would have seemed wonderful, if Wallace hadn't told grandmamma those more wonderful things. I'm so disappointed! But it is true that you cut the shawl into strips to pull Alice up! How could you do it? Wallace said your hands were all red."

"I shall never believe what I hear after this," said Amélie. "I did nothing of the kind. Heinrich brought a ladder, and Alice climbed up the bank in the usual way."

Belinda sighed. "Bluette's quite well," she said. "She's wearing her pale pink teagown to-day. I thought you'd be in bed with plasters on you, so I brought you a present. Grandma said I might. She loves tea,—she's English, you know. You may not like tea, but I hope you do, because this is the prettiest thing I have to give you."

Belinda drew from behind her a pasteboard box which she had deposited against the back of the chair very carefully when she entered.

"Guess?" she said, as she slowly untied the red string with which the lid was tied. "Guess!"

"Some flowers?"

"What kind of flowers?" said Belinda.

"Roses," said Amélie promptly, as if she could not hear china or glass jingling in the box, as Belinda moved it about.

"What kind of roses?"

"Tea roses," guessed Amélie.

"Right!" said Belinda.

"It can't be,—I just guessed at random."

"It is," said Belinda, with twinkling eyes. She slowly drew from the red cotton in the box two cups and saucers, as thin almost as paper and as white as snow, with a tea rose painted on each cup and two buds, with leaves, on each saucer.

"Oh, how lovely!"

"Grandma painted them when she was a girl," said Belinda. "And here is a teapot, I bought *that*. It's pink, with white rosebuds;—because I love pink and white."

"And I like pink and white, too," said Amélie. "How sweet and kind you and your grandmother are."

"Oh, I'm not always sweet,—though I must say grandma always *means* to be kind. She is going to send you a brass alcohol lamp and a kettle, so that you can have five-o'clock tea every day."

"But isn't that too near dinner time? We dine at six."

"That doesn't seem to make much difference to grandma. She's English, and we don't have dinner till seven, and there are muffins and tea at five. Let us make some tea now and be cosy."

"I shall ask my aunt——"

"Can't you have tea without asking your aunt? Laws! I do what I please, and ask grandma afterwards."

"It would not be my plan."

"Grandma doesn't like it. But I'm an orphan, you know. An orphan has to be more independent than other children, because, if God expected her to obey people, He wouldn't take her parents to Heaven."

"But God wants you to obey your grandmother."

"Amélie," said Belinda, solemnly, "if I minded grandmamma, I wouldn't have half a good time."

Amélie looked serious.

"We'll talk about it some other day," Belinda said. "Since we'll have to take such trouble about having a cup of tea, let's wait until I bring the brass tray and the lamp,—then we'll ask your aunt. Grandma likes our circle,—she approves of that. If she didn't I could never go to market for my poor people."

"Tell me about it."

"I'll begin with old Miss Favesham first. Ah, that's Bob's knock! Now we'll find out what he told Willie Golden."

"Oh, Amélie, will you sew this button on my golf trousers?" he began. "I don't like to ask—— Hello, Bel, you here?"

Bob carried a pair of brown trousers in his hand. One button had fallen off,—the others seemed to be trembling to their fall. Amélie smiled and drew out her sewing basket.

"That's what I like," said Bob, planting himself against the wall. "That's what I like, Lind——"

"I will not be called 'Bel' or 'Lind,'—my name is 'Belinda.' Now what *did* you tell Willie Golden?"

"That's what I like," continued Bob, calmly, "that's what I like, A,—long A,—it's more dignified than 'Bel' or 'Lind,'—so I'll call you 'A.' I like to have a girl sit down and begin to sew at once, without saying, 'You big elephant, what did you tear your buttons off for?' or, 'You're so rough, you can't keep a thing right for a minute!' What did I say to the Golden kid? I told him that Amélie and Heinrich had saved Alice's life with a ladder. His eyes bulged. 'Suppose a big man with a sword had come out of the dark?' I said that if he had he'd of killed——"

"He'd *have* killed——" corrected Amélie.

"He'd have killed Amélie as soon as look at her. 'My! My!' he said,—the Golden family always says, 'My! My!'—'if our Marie sees anything at night, she thinks it's a mad dog. Suppose there had been a mad dog?' Then I said I supposed that Cousin Amélie would have frightened it away by singing!"

Bob laughed. Belinda was indignant.

"The mocker shall be mocked some day," she said, with the air of one making a serious quotation. "Yea, the mocker shall be mocked."

Whenever Belinda wanted to convey the idea that she was quoting Scripture, she said, "Yea" at the beginning.

Bob bent double; Amélie laughed, too; Belinda maintained a profound silence.

"So that's the way Wallace's story about the man with the sword and the mad dog began," she said. "And I believed it. Well, even if it wasn't so bad as I thought, you're a blessed martyr anyhow, Amélie, and I'm sure you'd have brought Alice out all right, if there were mad dogs and men with swords."

"Thank you," said Amélie. "I'm glad there

were only the river, Alice, Heinrich, and the ladder."

"There's the first bell for dinner," Bob said. "I'll have to change my clothes. I've my fishing suit on. Caught three fish in the Potomac to-day——"

"Whales?" asked Belinda.

The altercation that followed was stopped only when Mrs. Watson came to ask Belinda to stay to dinner.

With a look at Amélie, Belinda said,—"Yes, thank you; but I'll run over and ask grandma."

XXV.

THE MARKET.

THE summer passed, and Amélie learned the story of Miss Favesham by observation, though Belinda had sketched it several times for her. In fact, she had been very busy. Miss Von Otto had come up to meet Heinrich, and to thank Amélie for having found him, and to make a novena of Thanksgiving. Heinrich was as ecstatically happy as a boy of his temperament could be. He insisted that he should finish his winter's work with the farmer before entering school. The farmer, who had a large truck farm on the banks of the Potomac, did not want to part with him.

"He is obedient; he gives me no trouble; he is not ashamed to soil his hands or to wear a blouse. He does not want to play all the time or go to the theater, like the American boy. He will, if he learns my business, enough education have. Ach, himmel! let him stay."

Miss Von Otto promised that Heinrich might return to him after a while if he wanted to; for the present he must begin to learn Latin and English and mathematics. The farmer took a reluctant farewell of Heinrich, presenting him with a five-dollar gold-piece.

Heinrich's story of his adventures in America was very simple. Cast into the Atlantic when the steamer went down, he had floated as well as he could until a sailor grasped him and drew him upon a raft. He found himself with ten others, boys and men. They were adrift for two nights and days.

"They were good to me,—for I sang and sang and sang. They were Germans, and they liked best 'The Little Red Rose.' Once we missed a sail, or, at least, it missed us. But at noon a great steamer came out of the sky. When I reached New York, one of the sailors gave me money to come down here to Mr. Kalbfleisch's farm. Here have I been."

Heinrich was put into a preparatory school to be fitted for college, and Miss Von Otto departed to her work, promising to return at Christmas. Heinrich looked on himself as Amélie's boy,

and her cares were not lightened by anxiety as to the purchase of his hats and coats, and as to whether he should have his hair cut in cool weather or not. He visited the Watsons once a month, and he stayed, as Bob's guest, over Sunday. Belinda and he did not get on well at first. He had begun to learn English from the boys at school, and when he was introduced to Belinda, he had said, with a pleasant smile on his rosy face,—

"The day is firing bouquets mit himself, ain't it, Fräulein?"

Belinda laughed.

"Why do you laugh? Have I not the idiomatic English?—What I say is it not an idiom? Wherefore is it not already?"

At this Belinda laughed again, and Heinrich was too shy to speak.

It was not until late in October that Amélie had time to think of anything outside of Heinrich and her studies. Alice and Clara had gone to Norfolk, where a friend of their mother's lived. She had been a governess, and she was anxious to have a hand in their education. She was Alice's godmother; she had been left a legacy, and she

hailed with pleasure the opportunity of guiding her old friend's daughters for love of the work.

One Saturday morning Belinda came for Amélie; she wanted her to go to the market to help Miss Favesham.

"If Mrs. Watson has nothing for me to do," Amélia said, "I will certainly go. I often wish that Mrs. Watson would let me do her marketing for her. I think I could learn. And I have never been to this wonderful market of yours."

"It certainly is mighty interesting," replied Belinda. "Hurry! Ask Mrs. Watson, and *do* get your hat. There's been frost,—you can get some persimmons for Bob. And bring some money,—do!"

Amélie ran off. The morning was lovely, and her blood danced at the thought of a walk on such a day.

Mrs. Watson said she had nothing for Amélie to do; but there was one thing she might do, if she would. Mrs. Watson had made her usual visit to the market earlier; she had forgotten that on the next Sunday the Forty Hours' Devotion would begin at St. Joseph's. Would Amélie buy some flowers for her? Amélie was delighted.

"I am ready," she said to Belinda, and they started off through the Capitol grounds at a brisk pace.

"Grandmamma does not like me to walk along Pennsylvania Avenue alone," Belinda said; "but with you she will not mind. The street isn't so nice as it ought to be down by the Botanical Gardens. Have you ever been in the Gardens? You must go! There is a sensitive plant there,—the most interesting thing! You can give it a pin or a piece of straw and it closes up at once, with the piece in its grasp."

The part of the Avenue nearest the Capitol did not give Amélie an impression of beauty. It was untidy, and most of the men visible seemed to be lounging aimlessly about. A shop at one of the street corners delighted her; it was devoted to the sale of souvenirs of Washington, and they were very cheap. They made her think of Susan. How all Susan's family would rejoice if that plate on which was imprinted a pink picture of the White House should find its way to them. And there was a little man holding a thimble, seated in a shell, with a sail above him on which "Washington" was plainly written! Amélie saw under her

very eye, Christmas gifts for the group under Susan's wing.

The aspect of the Avenue improved as they went on. Belinda was entranced before Parker & Bridget's window at Ninth Street.

"Oh, Amélie, look! There's a blue tea-gown in there on that lovely wax figure,—that would just suit Bluette. Do you think that I could make one like it? Bluette needs some new things."

"I am afraid you couldn't. That's what the French people call a 'creation.' When I was with Madame de Guérin and her *modiste* came, it seemed funny to hear her talk of 'creations.' It requires a lot of skill to make things in that way."

Belinda looked regretfully at the frock, which indeed seemed resplendent.

"I wish grandmamma would let me learn to make frocks, instead of keeping me at algebra and things like that. Do you think I could ever learn to make Bluette things in that way."

Amélie laughed.

"By the time you learned to make things like that you would not care for Bluette."

"Bluette will never grow too old to play with me," answered Belinda, laughing a little. "I tell

you when you haven't a little sister or anybody little in your house, a doll does very well. And Bluette is not an ordinary doll. Her intelligence is unusual in a doll;—though sometimes she is almost as stupid as a boy ;—I'll save that up to say to Bob. Now let's cross over to the Seventh Street entrance of the market. We've gone two squares out of the way."

They crossed the wide street and found themselves in the fringe of Center Market. All was bustle and activity. Belinda, carrying a strong net bag, made her way through the crowd as one familiar with every inch of ground. She stopped a moment to look at some ferns and palms at the entrance, and began a conversation with the colored man who watched over them, about a certain Virginia creeper that would not grow. On receiving a promise that another should be substituted for it, they entered the building. Everybody seemed to be in good humor; a butcher, surrounded by fat and lean mutton and beef, smiled rosily at Belinda, and asked after her grandmother. Amélie had never seen so many cheeses in her life. There was the crimson cheese, as round as a ball, and dozens of glittering silver-coated

Swiss and cream cheeses, shaded by great bunches of asters. Belinda gave her order and passed on to a stall farther on, given up to all sorts of things made in Italy. There was spaghetti; there was spaghettini; there was vermicelli, and many strange sauces in tins and flasks which Amélie did not know the names of.

At last they came to the aisle of the flower-stands.

"Oh!" cried Amélie. "Oh, it's like passing through a lane of pink and white and red!"

The cosmos flower bloomed in great bunches in the stands, and near it were vivid red, almost scarlet, dahlias. On the edge of the nearest stand were half-a-dozen bunches of perfumed violets,—pale blue and double. Brushing against Amélie's face,—she had to move aside to make way for two large baskets,—were long-stemmed American Beauty roses. Below them shone deep pink carnations in a glass bowl, and beyond towered palms above pots of nestling ferns.

"And that great bunch of Bridesmaid roses on the next stand!" exclaimed Amélie. "And the white cosmos! And the purplish cosmos! And the pink cosmos! And the lilac-colored cosmos!

"And the lemon-colored dahlias! And the white dahlias! And the crimson dahlias!" echoed Belinda, laughing, and proud of the impression the market had made on Amélie.

"Come. We can see these flowers again. Let's find Miss Favesham," Belinda said. "Here's ten cents. Take it. I'll tell you what to do with it in a moment."

Amélie, her eyes still on those lovely cosmos flowers, took the money.

XXVI.

MISS FAVESHAM.

Belinda walked rapidly to the B. Street side of the market. Amélie found herself in a new world. The sidewalk was lined with colored persons, each with something to sell,—and this something was invariably fresh from the country. Amélie's heart warmed to all these dark faces,—she had been brought up among such faces,—they were as children to her, young as she was,—and they reminded her of Susan. Against the walls of the market stood the little stalls; on the kerb were others of the same kind, against a background of dilapidated wagons. The faces of the women and young girls watching their meager collections of field and garden herbs and vegetables would have been pathetic, if they were not so good-humored. Men were busy about the wagons, but the sellers were, as a rule, women.

There was a shriveled old woman, wrapped in

a heavy shawl, with a little table in front of her, covered with specimens of gray moss, clumps of red berries and huge bunches of herbs. There was also a handful of persimmons in a tin can. These Belinda purchased at once for five cents. The old woman offered some sassafras bark and some dried wild cherries which seemed to have turned to stone.

"Are these wild asters?" asked Amélie.

"Oh, bless you, no,—no, chile. That's feverfew,—good, boiled, for fevers."

Amélie looked at the faded bunch of little flowers and remembered that she had read somewhere that, during the Great Plague in London, the suburbs of the city, in which this herb grew, were free from the disease.

"And it is really good for fever?"

"Bless you, chile, yes? White folks' fever, as well as cullid folks' fever. You jest bile it."

Amélie bought a bunch for the usual price,—"a nickle."

"Do you expect to have a fever?" asked Belinda.

"No," said Amélie, smiling, "but I bought the feverfew for Bluette. *She* might be ill."

Belinda laughed so merrily that several dark faces about her showed rows of white teeth in sympathy.

"Mushrooms—to-day, Aunt Eliza?" asked a bustling woman, who carried a net bag, like Belinda's.

"Too late, ma'am."

"Your nephew didn't send you any fresh figs this year from Virginia?"

"No, ma'am;—the winter was too cold,—killed 'em."

"I'm very sorry, Aunt Eliza;—but have you you any of those little yellow egg-shaped tomatoes?"

"Land knows I'm sorry I haven't, but Miss Gloriana Dangerfield,—she what you sees at the end, with red peppers among the parsley, hab a lot. I've got a turkey fattening on chestnuts for Thanksgiving;—only one. Shall I keep him for you, Mis' Moseleigh."

"Of course. I'll take this bunch of cosmos. Five cents? Thank you!"

Amélie became aware that she had been very rude. She had lost herself in this conversation and had listened in the boldest manner with her

eyes fixed on the portly and amiable Mrs. Moseleigh, who now, about to move away, noticed Amélie. Their eyes met; Amélie blushed, Mrs. Moseleigh smiled.

"You are interested in these colored people?"

"Yes," said Amélie, "they appear to be so poor, but so good-natured."

"They are poor and very good-natured," Mrs. Moseleigh answered. "I prefer to buy from them when I can,—a very little goes a great way with them. "As long as they can live on their little patches of ground in the country, they will not come to the city. The city is a bad place for these poor colored folk."

"It's a charity to keep them in this way, then," said Amélie.

"Certainly. It is a good thing to help anybody who tries to earn an honest living. Besides, where can you get tea-berries at this season, except from these folk? Yes, two bunches, Uncle Reggie," she continued, turning to a grizzle-haired old negro, who approached with his hands full of small bunches of the crimson tea-berries. "Ten cents,—thank you, Uncle Reggie."

"Perhaps," said Belinda, timidly, "you

wouldn't mind buying something from Miss Favesham."

"Certainly not,—if she has something I need," returned Mrs. Moseleigh, smiling.

"I'm afraid Miss Favesham may not have what you need, but, all the same, you'd be doing a great kindness."

"Where is she? Is she a colored person?" asked Mrs. Moseleigh, looking about her.

"Oh, no,—she's a poor white lady, she makes paper flowers. And Lily, her old cook, lets her stand near her. You see, she can't make the flowers very well, and the stores will not buy them. Besides, I think they're rather gone out of fashion. Her chrysanthemums are *lovely*, I think,—and only five cents apiece. You'd have to pay twenty in the stores."

A thin, tall figure stood near a stand built by placing an ironing board on two barrels. Erect, graceful, dressed in worn black, Miss Favesham looked like a lady, and a very poor one. Her pale face was framed by rolls of white hair, which contrasted with her neat black bonnet. She held in both hands bouquets of red, white and yellow chrysthemums, made of tissue papers. The flow-

ers looked real enough, but their leaves and stems were painfully unreal. A flat basket, containing pink, red and yellow roses, lay on the stand among the pot herbs, sassafras, sage, dried sweet marjoram and tea-berries.

"Dear! dear!" said Mrs. Moseleigh, "she certainly does look like a lady. What's your name, little girl?—you've a kind heart."

Belinda, blushing, gave her name, with her address.

"I'll go to see you to find out more about Miss Favesham. I'm *not* devoted to paper flowers, but, my dear, that bunch of white and yellow chrysanthemums shall be on my dinner table to-night."

"Really," said Amélie, as she watched Mrs. Moseleigh possess herself in a very courteous manner of Miss Favesham's flowers, "there are so many good people in the world."

"Now, you go!" said Belinda.

Amélie stepped forward and bought three white chrysanthemums and two pink roses. It was now Belinda's turn.

Miss Favesham's slender hands trembled. Her gloves were very old, but neatly darned.

"Oh, Belinda,—you dear!" she said. "I've had such a good day,—nearly everything sold! I have only three chrysanthemums and these five roses."

"I must have the roses," said Belinda, "I really must."

"Five cents to you, dear," said Miss Favesham, her cheeks flushing with pleasure, "I'd charge fifteen to everybody else."

"Then I must have the three chrysanthemums, —that, with the roses, will make twenty cents."

"Oh, no, I couldn't charge *you*——"

"They're for friends, not for myself," said Belinda. "Here's the money."

"A nice-looking girl just bought some chrysanthemums——"

"Amélie, yes,—shall I call her? There she is!"

"No,—some day, when I have a better place, you shall bring her to see me. But don't introduce her here. I never mix business with social affairs."

"Good-by, Miss Favesham."

"Here I am again!" It was Mrs. Moseleigh who spoke, smilingly. "I am so pleased with

my flowers, I have turned back to get some more."

The pleasure depicted on the faces of Belinda, Miss Favesham and reflected on that of Lily,—who was the blackest of her race,—delighted Mrs. Moseleigh.

"They're all sold!" cried Belinda.

"All!" echoed Lily, who stopped in the act of emptying a pint of persimmons into the basket of a boy.

"Yes," said Miss Favesham, modestly. "My works have been much appreciated to-day. I shall have pink carnations, imitated after the Malmaison variety next Saturday."

"Keep a dozen for me, please," said Mrs. Moseleigh, graciously. "By the way, my dear," she continued to Amélie, betraying the reason why she had turned back, "what is your name?"

"Amélie Watson."

"Thank you!" said Mrs. Moseleigh, in a disappointed tone. "I thought you were one of the Grays."

"My mother was a Gray."

"Ah, I know now! How like you are to her!—she was my bridesmaid!"

"How small the world is!" sighed Miss Favesham. Now that her flowers were sold, she entered social life again. "You may introduce your friends to me, Belinda."

XXVII.

A CONVERSATION.

Miss Favesham walked with Mrs. Moseleigh and the two girls to the corner, then said good-by and waited until they had crossed the avenue. When Belinda looked back she had disappeared.

"Where does she live?" Mrs. Moseleigh asked.

"I don't know," Belinda said. "She speaks of having only a poor little room."

"Dear me! She is proud as well as poor;—I must catch my car,—here it comes!—Connecticut Avenue! I shall see you both again."

"It's been quite exciting, hasn't it?" asked Belinda. "Just think of your mother having been Mrs. Moseleigh's bridesmaid. Everybody in the South seems to have been everybody else's bridesmaid some time or other, though," Belinda added. "You ought to hear grandma talk! *Everybody* in Virginia is her cousin!"

Amélie laughed.

"Shall we walk?"

"We have forgotten the flowers you spoke of, —for your church."

"Oh, yes,—for the Forty Hours' Devotion. Will you come back?"

Belinda assented. The girls went back to the market, and reveled again in the great masses of dahlias, cosmos flowers, and chrysanthemums on the stands.

Amélie found that she could afford, by giving up her allowance of candy for a month, a palm, as well as the great bunch of the cosmos she had set her heart on. The florist agreed to send them to the church, and the girls started homeward.

"Now tell me about Miss Favesham," Amélie said, after she had balanced a little pot of maidenhair, for her aunt, well in one hand.

"Well, you know," Belinda began, eagerly, "it was through the circle. A few of us on Capitol Hill thought we'd help people. So we had a bazar in our house, and we made eight dollars. It happened that a few days after that I was wheeling grandma through the Capitol grounds, and I saw a little woman in black almost lying on one of the seats. She was very white and thin,—thinner and whiter than you saw her to-

day,—and grandma just looked at her. 'Belinda, my dear,' she said, 'wheel my chair up near that poor lady,—she's starving. I know the look. Run across to the Clover Dairy for a little milk, and get some biscuits at Craycroft's. Hurry back! Go, my dear, don't be afraid to leave me!'"

"Dear! dear!" said Amélie, much interested, "and was she really starving?"

"You just wait!—grandma looked so imperative out of her brown eyes, that I just *ran*. The Clover people lent me a little can, and Mr. Craycroft gave me the biscuits, and it didn't take me long to get back. Grandma is so rheumatic that she couldn't get out of her chair, but she managed to hold the poor lady's hand,—and *she*—it was Miss Favesham—was almost fainting. I gave her a small sip of milk,—such a small sip—and some more, and then a tiny piece of biscuit. Grandma asked a policeman to lift her on to the bench. And there she stayed until I wheeled Miss Favesham to our house. Wasn't it brave of dear old grandma, who has been in her room for so many years? But the policeman was very kind, and a robin came and perched on the back of the bench!"

"I hope that your grandmamma did not take cold or anything——"

"Oh, no! It was a lovely day. Well, Miss Favesham lay on the sofa in the drawing-room and we made her eat and drink some more. 'It was the heat,' she said. It seemed that she had expected to get a place in the Library, but she couldn't. We couldn't ask her many questions,—but she told us that she had been very well off, and that her people,—the Faveshams of Bracken Hall, in Virginia,—had lost everything. She wouldn't let us send for a carriage, though grandmamma insisted,—but went off to the car alone. I know that she had only one car ticket, for it fell out of her glove, and I picked it up."

"And she was all alone in the world," said Amélie, with a shudder.

"She *is* all alone in the world," answered Belinda.

"God pity her!" said Amélie.

"While she was talking to grandma, she said, 'I can't do a single thing,—for when I was young girls were not expected to do anything, except learn a little music and French. Even my embroidery is old-fashioned. I can make paper

flowers!' 'Very well,' grandma said, 'I'll buy some paper flowers,—I'm very fond of them, but since my fingers have become rheumatic, I can't make them.' 'We had an old family servant, Lily,' Miss Favesham said, 'perhaps she'd sell them for me in the market.'

"I suppose Miss Favesham thought it would be proud not to sell them herself,—so she began. Few persons bought them, and one Saturday I saw her crying, and poor Lily, bending over her sassafras and tea-berries, was crying, too, so I just had the circle adopt one of Miss Favesham's red roses as a badge. That sold some. Then, for the Fourth of July, your uncle got some club to order three hundred red, white and blue flowers. Oh, that was such a help! Miss Favesham bought a new gown,—hers was falling to pieces. But now I just have to watch and *make* people buy flowers on Saturday. About Christmas time the priest at your church will buy a great many for the tree for the Sunday-school children, and grandma's minister will take some, too,—and our circle will have to have favors for the Christmas dance."

"I wonder if I can help?" asked Amélie.

"All alone in the world! And so gentle! And so poor! And so unable to help herself! Oh, Belinda, it's awful!"

"Yes, I know," said Belinda, "but if she had been a little girl like me when she was young, she'd know how to help herself. Why, I have learned to do lots of things. I can make bread and cakes."

"But you couldn't sell bread and cakes."

"Why?"

"Oh, because——"

"*My* bread and cakes are good enough to sell," returned Belinda, with an air of offended dignity. "I'll make you a meringue cake some time, if you don't believe me!"

"I didn't mean *that*. I only meant that a young lady couldn't sell bread and cakes."

Belinda laughed.

"You amuse *me*."

Amélie flushed a little. The tone of superiority in the little girl's voice was very evident. She was silent. Belinda laughed again.

"Why couldn't I sell bread and cakes if people wanted to buy them, and I had to earn my living?"

"I don't think your grandma would like it."

"If they were *good* cakes grandma would say, 'I wouldn't sell them, it might look bold.' Then I would say, 'But, grandma, we must pay the rent.' 'Well, my dear,' she would say, 'if you are sure they are well made, with plenty of good butter, sell as many as you can.' Oh, grandma is not aristocratic in *that* way. She wouldn't mind honest work; she hates meanness, —that's all. When I grow up I am going to be able to earn my living, and grandma's, too."

"That's right," said Amélie, "but I hope you will be luckier than Miss Favesham."

"I intend to be," answered Belinda, pursing her lips in a determined way. "Sometimes I think I'll turn Catholic, when grandma dies, and be a Sister. Sisters suit *me;* they're ladies, but they're not afraid to do anything. The Watsons make me tired——"

"That's slang, Belinda,—besides——"

"I mean that their ways fatigue me,—I must try not to use slang, since you don't like it;—but, though they are your cousins, I can't stand their talk about work. It's not proper to do *this;* it's not proper to do *that.* Now don't be angry.

"I'm not, Belinda,—but you mustn't find fault with my cousins."

"I tell you that if they were left alone, they'd starve rather than scrub, I do believe. Now, you ought to see *me* scrub. What would you do if you were poor?"

"I don't know," said Amélie, helplessly.

"Come;—we have time to run over to the Botanical Garden and see the mimosa!"

When the mimosa had gripped a pin and a tooth-pick, the girls went homeward, feeling that they had spent a profitable morning.

XXVIII.

MR. WATSON.

Alice and Clara were to be home at Thanksgiving. In the meantime Mr. Watson and Alice and Bob became very good friends. Bob had been rather afraid of his father, who was somewhat stern in his manner towards the boy. And this was due to the fact that Clara was constantly complaining of Bob's manners. Arthur, the boy at West Point, had been the favorite of his sisters, and, without the slightest desire to do Bob injustice, the girls, by their constant criticisms, had led their father to believe that he was boisterous, rude and rather silly.

"I wish, Amélie, that you would take your uncle for a walk," Mrs. Watson said, when Amélie had arrived, after her discovery of Miss Favesham. "Not to-day but to-morrow. You can take him for a brisk trot after Mass. He enjoys talking about music; he is not looking well; he misses the girls—I do wish you'd do it."

"The service will be longer than usual," Amélie said. "The Forty Hours will begin."

"That will make it very late,—we dine at half-past one o'clock on Sundays."

"Yes," Amélie said. And then, brightening,—"Why, aunt, you can give us some luncheon in a box,—sufficient for uncle, Bob and me. We'll take uncle to Mass, stop for the luncheon, and spend the afternoon at Rock Creek;—we'll take Mrs. Dana's 'How to Know the Wild Flowers,' and Bob will enjoy making a little collection."

Mrs. Watson looked doubtful.

"Your uncle never goes to Mass. We never speak about religion."

"But there will be no harm in my asking him."

"No," said Mrs. Watson, still doubtfully, "but don't let him think you consulted me. I hope Bob will not annoy his father."

At dinner, Mr. Watson listened with interest to Amélie's account of Miss Favesham, and, after a time, said,—it was suggested by the mention of the flowers in the market,—that he wished his children had more interest in trees and flowers.

"Why, uncle, Bob takes the greatest interest,"

Amélie said, seeing her chance. "He and I have been studying the wild flowers with Mrs. Dana's book, every Sunday for nearly two months. You'd be surprised, if you'd examine Bob."

"Bob?" asked Mr. Watson. "Bob! I didn't think Bob was interested in anything except baseball and mischief."

Bob blushed and looked sulky.

"Uncle, let us go to Rock Creek on Sunday,—then we'll show how much we know."

"Agreed!" said Mr. Watson.

"They are going to sing a Mass by Millard, with an 'Ave Maria' by Brahms, at our church; we'll all go, and aunt will put up some luncheon——"

"I must go to early Mass," said Mrs. Watson, "and after that, I have many things to do,—shoals of letters to write, among other things."

"I wish you could go."

"But I can't, Amélie."

"An 'Ave Maria' by Brahms?" inquired Mr. Watson, curiously. "For soprano?"

"Yes," said Amélie.

"I should like to hear it."

"Come to Mass with us, uncle," Amélie said, while her aunt cast an uneasy glance at Mr. Wat-

son. "All the accompaniments are very well played."

"Very well;—but," added her uncle, "shall we not be late for our botanical expedition?"

"Not at all," Amélie answered. "We'll have the loveliest day!"

After dinner Mr. Watson buried himself in his paper, and Mrs. Watson tried to act as if nothing unusual had happened.

As Amélie was going to her room, her aunt stopped her in the hall.

"Oh, my dear," she said, with tears in her eyes, "*how* did you manage it? To think of his going to Mass! Why, he has never entered a church since his brother became a convert."

"I am glad you are pleased," Amélie said. "Oh, *so* glad! But I haven't done anything. I just told him about the music,—that is all."

"Well, well, child,—something may come of it, and I should be so happy."

And so this Saturday, so eventful to Amélie, closed.

Sunday came. To Bob's great pleasure the day was delightfully sunshiny; it was the typical October day in Washington. Mrs. Watson came

home from early Mass, smiling and happy. It was pleasant to think that her husband was going to church,—she had long hoped for this, and this morning she had prayed with all her heart that he might be drawn, by this act, nearer to God.

Bob strapped "How to Know the Wild Flowers" to the luncheon box,—which Mrs. Watson had filled,—and, as the church bell began to ring, Mr. Watson came down-stairs in his best frock coat.

"You don't often see papa in a tall hat and frock coat," Bob said, gazing at him in admiration.

"You don't often see papa going to church," said Mr. Watson, laughing. "When we come home, I think I'll change my clothes for some more suitable for a botanical walk."

Mr. Watson was struck by the beauty of the altar decorations, as he followed Amélie and Bob up the middle aisle. Tiers upon tiers of candles arose from great bowers of pink and white cosmos flowers on the high altar, and the side altars actually glowed with great masses of red dahlias. He imitated Bob's genuflection as well as he could and then knelt and tried to recall the "Our

Father." He had not prayed for a long time, but the old prayer came back to him. When he seated himself, he glanced at Bob, who was still kneeling. The golden light from one of the stained-glass windows fell on Bob's face and seemed to accentuate his look of deep devotion. Mr. Watson almost started. Could this be the face of his careless, thoughtless, merry son? Was it possible that the atmosphere of the church could so change the boy? A new respect for the child mingled suddenly with the father's love for him. The organ pealed out,—it was well played, and Mr. Watson settled back in his pew, content for the moment.

The solemn High Mass seemed to him a thing of great beauty. He followed the service closely by means of the prayer book Amélie had given him. The sunlight mingled with the glow of the candles, the scent of the incense, the movements of the priests,—light, color, sweetness, all weaving and interweaving with the words of the music.

"It's a living prayer," he said to himself.

And when the soprano began to sing Brahms' rich music, Mr. Watson wondered why he had let his prejudices keep him from this temple of beauty so long.

At the Elevation he fell upon his knees. He would have done this at any time from politeness, but to-day he felt a strange peace fall upon him, as he bent his head. And, when the Mass was over, tears came into his eyes;—half-involuntarily, he stretched out his hand to Bob, and Bob clasped it.

"I must get nearer to my son," he thought. "I must learn to love God as he loves him."

Then came the procession of the Blessed Sacrament for the opening of the Devotion of the Forty Hours. The very little girls with pink and white sashes and baskets of rose-leaves, and the very little boys, innocent, open-eyed, demure for the moment, with nosegays of all sorts of flowers, the larger boys, with their red sashes, and the long procession of white-gowned girls of all ages preceding the priest, clothed in golden vestments and bearing the most precious burden, moved slowly through the aisles to the solemn singing of the "Pange lingua gloriosi."

The end came at last;—a march burst from the organ gallery, and Bob, with his arm in his father's, went down the aisle. The father and son had forgotten Amélie, but she was not unhappy. She felt that, somehow or other, a change had taken

place in her uncle, and she murmured a prayer of thanksgiving as she went out.

Mr. Watson was in unusually good spirits; he turned to Amélie, as she descended the steps.

"I'm obliged to you," he said, "for some happy hours. I'll have something new to tell Alice and Clara when I write to-morrow."

Amélie laughed; a woman near her started at the sound.

"It's Miss Amélie!"

"Just say 'Amélie,' Miss Favesham," Amélie said, recognizing Belinda's friend. "Uncle, let me introduce you to Miss Favesham."

Mr. Watson made his best bow. Poor Miss Favesham looked very wan and tired, and, among the well-dressed people, her black frock and bonnet seemed unusually shabby.

"Uncle," Amélie said, "don't you think my aunt would like to know Miss Favesham?"

"Miss Favesham," Mr. Watson said, smiling, "my wife is obliged to lunch alone to-day, and, if you will be kind enough to keep her company, it will be doing us a great favor. We ought to be informally kind on Sunday,—and you'll be very kind, if you'll waive ceremony."

"Oh, do, Miss Favesham!" pleaded Amélie, "and you'll see how charmingly I've arranged your chrysanthemums in a vase."

Miss Favesham had hesitated; this speech decided her.

"Thank you," she answered. "I live some distance from this church; but I always come here because I like the beautiful Catholic service. But don't you think I'll inconvenience your aunt."

Amélie reassured her, and Miss Favesham walked home with the group. Mr. Watson talking the while about the "classicism" of Brahms in a way that puzzled Miss Favesham, who preferred "Maryland, My Maryland," to any other melody.

"You're a dear one," Bob whispered admiringly to Amélie. "You saw that the poor old lady needs a square meal. You can't fool your Uncle Dudley,—I know you!"

Mrs. Watson understood the situation, and no princess could have been welcomed more warmly than the broken old woman, whose memories of the past made her present darker.

When the three returned from a happy ramble by Rock Creek, their hands full of late wild flowers, Miss Favesham was still with Mrs. Watson.

"I am going to give her the little room at the top of the house,—the sunny tower room, my dear," she said to her husband. "How poor she is, and how humbly she bears her burden."

"You are very good," her husband said. "I approve. It seems to me that this has been such a happy day, that I ought to help to make everybody happy."

XXIX.

NOËL.

THE days of autumn sped. Thanksgiving and Christmas was near. Alice and Clara were again at home. On Christmas eve the three girls sat in the drawing-room, very contentedly working and talking; the peaceful spirit of the season was upon them.

"Well," said Amélie, as she looked at the snow-covered Capitol grounds, and then resumed her work of painting a sprig of holly on Bob's dinner card,—for it was Christmas eve, "Well, I have been very happy since that night in August."

Alice laughed. She was coloring the hearts of the water-lilies on a card, for Heinrich and his sister were coming to the Christmas dinner.

"I never thought we could like each other. What shall I put on Miss von Otto's card?"

"A pansy—for thought, you know;—how long she thought about that poor boy!"

"Your Susan is so pleased with everything here—she is to stay a whole week with the cook, you know."

"Dear old Susan!"

"I have put a wild rose with a thorn, on Belinda's card. She'll appreciate that!"

Amélie laughed.

"God has made us all very happy," she said. "See, I've painted a white cloud with the kindly star showing through for your father. Ever since Amélie took him to Mass, he seems happier. This is the season of the star."

"If we can set a good example to him, I am sure papa will one day be a Catholic. It's easier to be good at Christmas than any other time!" said Alice with a sigh. "I suppose that if I'd been as much with Sisters as you have, I wouldn't be so worldly."

"I hope you don't think I owe my temper to the Sisters!" said Amélie laughing. "Oh, Alice, we must hang the two whistles on the Christmas tree;—I knew I had seen one like that which Heinrich gave me. It was Miss von Otto's, of course. Father Egbert—wasn't he kind to us on that awful night?—will come in after dinner. He

will be too busy to come earlier. Everybody has a book for him, even Belinda."

"Do you really forgive me?" asked Alice. "Do you *really* forgive me? I——"

Améle rose and put her hand across her cousin's mouth.

"If you will only love me a little you can find fault with me as much as you like! Oh, Alice, I always wanted a sister, and now I have two'"

From Amélie's room came the notes of "Die Lorlei," sung by Belinda. Then suddenly Clara dashed into the accompaniment of "Adeste Fideles" and the voices of Heinrich, Bob, Belinda and Clara joined jubilantly in the chorus,—"Venite Adoremus!"

Here all sounded Miss Favesham's high treble, quavering and uncertain.

"Amélie," said Clara, "we must give this card with the yellow chrysanthemum on it to dear Miss Favesham. It is the prettiest one of all."

"I intended to send it to——" began Alice.

"No! no!" said Clara. "It is too lovely for anybody except the poorest person we know!"

The three girls were silent.

"You are right,"—Alice spoke, after having

cast a regretful look at her pet card. "I intended it for our rich Norfolk friend;—but at Christmas the little ones and the poor should have all the prettiest things!"

"Adeste Fideles!"—Christmas Eve had come at last.

THE END.

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